

# LABOR MAGAZINE



THE VOICE OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR

## **Where Do American Workers Stand Today?**

*By* A. J. MUSTE

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## **Why Don't You Organize?**

*An Answer By* JOHN P. BURKE

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## **Hard Times Hit Auto Workers**

**MARCH, 1931**

**25 CENTS**

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# LABOR AGE

Vol. XX—No. 3 March, 1931

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## IN THIS ISSUE

**A**UTOMOBILES have suffered from depression, also. At the beginning of the new year, applications for licenses fell in number. The "gasoline buggy," hailed by a number of economists and economic writers, as the great stop-gap which prevented a fall of Prosperity in the period before the Great Crash, is feeling the lean and hungry years along with the rest. At the same time, it remains one of our chief industries, large in magnitude and defying unionism. The story of the Automobile, up to date, of the present status of labor in Detroit, of the widespread unemployment and suffering in that metropolis, is told by one who lives in the midst of it. "Hard Times Hit Detroit's Auto Workers" is more than an account of current events there. It is a pocket history of the auto workers and the capital city of their industry.

**T**HE problem in automobiles, as in every industry, is the problem of organizing the unorganized. No group—A. F. of L., Communist or what-not—has found the golden key to that riddle. President John P. Burke of International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers accepts our invitation in our last issue and discusses frankly the difficulties confronting the organizer in his industry. From those who criticize, Brother Burke demands "spirit of understanding." The organization effort in the field looks different than from behind a desk and from a swivel chair. We hope that Brother Burke's article will evoke considerable discussion of the ways and means of effective organization.

**T**HAT this organization drive will come from a Labor Movement "esconced behind its marble facades" is more than doubtful, according to the burden of Israel Mufson's account of his visit to Washington. "The Story of the Stuffed Shirt" gives a glimpse of official Washington

and of the official Labor Movement, and then moves in contrast out to Buffalo with its destitute unemployed and its grossly underpaid workers. American leadership's false fronts are more and more clearly discerned, as Mufson moves West through an "over-production"-stricken country.

**B**UFFALO'S tale of low wages is duplicated by Massachusetts and its textile industries. Ruth Shallcross, graduate of Bryn Mawr, has gone into Massachusetts mills and shops as a worker among workers. She has come out of that Commonwealth with a wealth of information on how things stand. Part of this she imparts to us in "New Industries Invade the Bay State." Something to think over—and act upon!

**H**AVING thus noted several local situations, it is of interest and value to get a summary of the condition of the country as a whole. A. J. Muste gives us this in his informative account. Impressions gleaned in his seven-weeks' trip from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back again are boiled down to these two pages of conclusions—on the state of mind of the workers and farmers and how America fares out in the grass roots. There seems to be plenty of room for C. P. L. A. activities out in the "wide open spaces."

**R**ATHER optimistic—too much so, a great many folks would say—is the view expressed by Louis F. Budenz, who has a tendency to look at the brighter side of worker's revolt. At any rate, his appeal is one that should be heeded, hard as it may be to carry out in practise. Will there be a response to his call for "100 young fighters" through the country, dedicated to agitation? The answer should be of consequence to future labor struggles.

**W**HETHER the industrial weather be brightening or clouding up, from the slant of possible extensive revolt, the C. P. L. A. staff continues to do its darndest to get out the necessary message. In "The C. P. L. A. Goes to the Country" narrative of the Muste trip is continued in detail, that trip now having been concluded. The adventures of Mufson and Bellaver in their "C. P. L. A. on wheels" expedition are also given sketchily for the first two weeks of that "tour." They are now striking out into the Middle West—so popularly known as the present No Man's Land of Progressive Causes. As they travel Westward, the story of their experiences will be gone into at more length. Out of it the message of unemployment insurance and of other labor necessities will have reached the country, and we will have secured further analysis of the American worker and whither he is tending.

**F**RED JERGER again contributes some of his forceful cartoons. The hypocrisy of the Federal Government's "concern" about the unemployed measured against its indifferent performance is graphically delineated in "A Grave Situation."

**F**ROM his news watch-tower at the New York bureau of the Federated Press, Frank Palmer reviews the current events in the worker's world of the U. S. A. "The March of the Machine" is also still with us—creating much comment from month to month—and our other regular features continue.



# · LABOR · AGE ·

March, 1931

## EDITORIALS

**D**ROUGHT-STRICKEN farmers and depression-stricken ex-soldiers have put the Great Engineer to rout. The farm bloc has compelled him to accept that

### **Federal "Doles"— But Not for the Unemployed**

which he declared to be "dangerously near a dole" a few weeks before. Under the flamboyant disguise of "agricultural rehabilitation," a hungry farmer will be kept alive by the government with a "dole" of food. Even the administration politics against the farmer, to which the Red Cross stooped, has availed the Great Engineer nothing.

The ex-soldiers have gotten distinctly out of hand. The rank and file of the veterans, under pressure of the "panic," have broken the leash strings which bound them to Big Business through official American Legion patriotic bunk. The politicians and the White House have noted with what readiness the general public has signed the petitions for relief for the ex-servicemen. The shadow of the "man with the gun," trained in the use of arms, has sent a shudder of fear through official Washington. The veteran has been used to taking orders but now he seems intent on giving orders. Congress heeded and the Great Engineer was over-ridden, rough-shod.

It is characteristic of the contempt in which the factory slave is held by the American legislator that no serious consideration has been given to the city breadliner save when he is a veteran. Senators Wheeler and LaFollette did speak up for him, but the Republican and Democratic majorities passed him by. The instrument to which he looked for representation, the American Federation of Labor, has dumbly submitted to Hooverian blandishments and has betrayed the unemployed.

Unless and until industrial workers will follow the example of farmers and ex-soldiers, and break loose from the cowardly policy of A. F. of L. officialdom, they will continue to stand in breadlines and sleep in flop-houses.

If they do break loose, and express their power in an organized way, they will secure speedy action at Washington. Had the Lexington-Concord spirit of the England, Ark., farmers spread to the industrial masses, they would be included in the farmer-soldier "dole" today.

British statesmanship granted the "dole" to British workers rather than have a Revolution.

When the unemployed city worker joins with the farmer and the ex-soldier in demanding relief Big Business will in self-protection cry out for unemployment insurance as a systematic way to relieve all.

**S**PASMODIC strikes here and there give warning of what is inevitably ahead. Only the sleeping sickness which has struck the official Labor Movement prevents the expression of discontent among the masses from coming more forcibly to the surface.

### **Mass Strikes—1917-18 And Now**

In Philadelphia 3,500 unorganized hosiery workers in several mills respond to the strike call. In New England a series of walk-outs have occurred under Communist auspices. The combers of the American Woolen Company at Lawrence stop work of their own volition, as a protest against the speed-up. Neckwear workers follow shirt workers in strike protest in notoriously "open shop" New Haven. Machinists at the Wright Aeroplane Works at Paterson take part in a protracted stoppage, despite the quietness with which the strike is handled.

Strange as it may appear, there is something comparable in terms of labor unrest between the immediately approaching years and the period 1917-18. The economic situation is just reversed. Then, rapidly rising prices led to a widespread demand for higher wages. A wave of organization swept over the country, as a result. Today wages are falling, in much speedier ratio than prices. There is a fiction abroad in the land that wages have not fallen so rapidly as they actually have, due to the fact that part-time employment, staggering, and "bootleg" cutting of wages have not been taken into account. The worker, with one-half time work and receiving less than one-half time pay in his envelope, knows that his pocketbook cannot be stretched to cover as much as formerly. The question before him is: Has his rent, his \$15 ton of hard coal, his 10-cent loaf of bread, his 16-cent quart of milk, his 40-cent pound of steak, been cut to half price?

The practical answer being "No," the consequent pressure will compel the unorganized worker to take action. Just as in 1917-18, economic necessity promoted successful strikes everywhere, so in 1931 and after revolt is bound to flare up, if taken advantage of. It may be pointed out that the organization activities of that former period were not largely the work of organizers assigned to that job, but of voluntary agitators from the ranks of Labor. As an example, the great Chicago packing house unionization was due almost solely to John Schmidt, business agent of Local 88 of the Meat Cutters Union of St. Louis. Without help from his international union and in spite of them, he carried on this important work in a city beyond his "jurisdiction" and put it over successfully. The 31 strikes in St. Louis in those two years, headed by the big street car strike, were all spontaneous uprisings of the unorganized workers, aided by local labor "agitators." The international unions, in practically every case, stepped in only

after the fights had been won. They waited until large groups of dues-paying members were handed them on a silver platter.

It is even more impossible to expect anything in this period from the international unions in general, because of the tremendously larger stakes that the official heads of these unions have in their jobs. This is due to the great increases in salaries they have received since 1917-18. Any "disturbance of the economic equilibrium" which comes from knock-down-and-drag-out struggles brings on them that same fear which, Beard points out, is characteristic of the trader class: fear of the loss of property (in this case, jobs.) To quote one case: The Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers is falling constantly in membership. It has 8,000 workers organized of a possible 800,000 in the industry. And yet, this last year its Executive Committee hesitated to use \$50,000 voted by the union convention for organization work.

The agitation of the coming years must come from voluntary organizers, free of property-loss dread. Mass strikes await their wider activities.

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**M**AYOR MACKEY of Philadelphia comforts the sunshine chorus of Babbitt optimists by stating that he may yet have to call out the militia against the unemployed.

**Unemployment Problem Solved April First** Another solution, *a la Americaine*, may be more painless (to the optimists) and nearer at hand.

Spring is the season of hope. Grass, birds, bees and flowers regale the spirit of Man. They feed his soul. Why, then, need for such a paltry, sordid thing as physical food? April first, accordingly, has been set as the date to end all relief for the unemployed. Charity organization societies, Red Cross, Salvation Army, municipalities and the rest of the "hand out" fraternities will have completed their work then. Unemployment insurance having been rejected as a "dole" which individualistic Americans should not accept, the unemployed will now be left to nurture themselves at Nature's breast.

With "sweet charity relief" at its height, only 1,000 died a day from starvation, according to Senator Caraway. With such a low death rate, the solution of the problem will be excruciatingly slow. But the optimists can perk up and predict that April first will see a great change. Congress no longer being in session, there will be no danger of unemployment insurance interfering with the natural law.

Properly weakened by bread lines and soup kitchens, the unemployed will find themselves starving on April first, starved on April second and dead on April third. The surplus labor supply will be ended. This will accord with the Divine plan, as outlined by President John Edgerton of the National Association of Manufacturers at the Washington conference of the churches on unemployment. Instead of unemployment insurance, Edgerton recommended to the unemployed worker that, "on bended knees, with the Bible in one hand and the Constitution in the other, with eyes upraised to heaven, he pray to God."

There is only one possible hitch to this optimistic program. The unemployed may decide that if they are to die, it were much better to die with a full meal in their stomach and one of Mayor Mackey's militamen's bullets in their back.

Such is the "constructive" solution which has come out of the Julius Barnes conferencing, the White House ultimatums against starvation, and all the dust that has been stirred up to choke out unemployment insurance.

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**S**OME historian of the future, writing on "The Fall of the Profit System," will scan with wonder the official record of the American Federation of Labor on the Russian Revolution. Tolerance for "the Reds" has burst into song, Rudy Vallee crooning "I've got a Communitist feeling for you."

### Healthy Labor Voices on "the Reds"

The *Economist*, authoritative British business weekly, declares that progress in the first two years of the "Five-Year Plan" has been "very remarkable." Our own business interests, looking at the favorable Russian trade balance, are divided as to which way to commit hari-kari on the Russian question.

Not so the official A. F. of L. Matt Woll continues to be one of the chief speakers in opposition to Russian recognition and in favor of embargoes on Russian products. He does valiant service thereby for the lumber barons who murdered A. F. of L. organizers at Bogalusa and for the manganese trust which would murder A. F. of L. organizers if there were need therefor.

Fortunately, there is a growing proof that this reactionary attitude is not that of the American wage workers as a whole. The *Toledo Union Leader* of January 31 of this year says in a leading editorial on Hamfishery:

"We have the report of the 'Ham-Fish' Commission which brings in a mass of bunk that could all have been secured by just staying in Washington and reading editorials in the capitalist dailies.

"The recommendations offered by this outfit are loaded with T.N.T. as it is only a step once the communists are somewhat suppressed to make all laws of suppression apply to the union movement.

"Those of our so-called labor leaders who are falling in line with such a lop-sided, ridiculous propaganda are certainly a long way removed from the rank and file of organized labor and are either terribly short-sighted or else hypnotized by too much contact with representatives of the big financial rulers of this once free country."

These are forthright words from the official paper of the Toledo Central Labor Union. They give the opinion of the rank and file labor, which is not deceived by the pseudo-statesmanlike bunk of official A. F. of L. pronouncements.

The *Tacoma Labor Advocate*, organ of the Tacoma, Wash., Central Labor Council, expresses itself in a somewhat similar vein on "Russian Embargoes." In its issue of January 30, it opposes embargoes on Soviet products and pleads instead for liberal credit to Russia. It takes issue with those "who are subject to the strange obsession that Communism endangers American institutions" and who think that "an embargo and repression are the prime requisites to meet the case."

Such are some of the healthy voices which come out of the real labor movement. As time goes on, and the Russian experiment continues to gain strength, they will be heard more frequently and with added volume.

IN the long history of labor betrayals in this country, there have been some more crooked but none more sad and inexcusable than that involved in the so-called settlement a few weeks ago of the Danville textile strike.

### U. T. W. Takes Licking in Danville

Despite repeated assurances that the U. T. W. and A. F. of L. were in Danville solely for the purpose of helping the workers to "cooperate" more effectively with the management of the Dan River Company and months of patience in the face of discharge for union membership on the part of the employees, the union was forced, in the midst of a terrific depression in the industry, to call a strike.

Despite desperate appeals and because no adequate preparation had been made, there was never enough relief for the Danville strikers who had a touching faith in the U. T. W. leaders. By the first of the present year the situation was desperate. Any organization would have been forced to bring the thing to an end almost anyhow.

The U. T. W. and A. F. of L. in Danville chose the least desirable way. A business man friendly to the union had some private meetings with a brother-in-law of H. R. Fitzgerald, president of the struck mills. The brother-in-law pointed out that Mr. Fitzgerald (who had bitterly fought the effort on the part of his employees to organize and had driven them to starvation by his attitude) had recently taken back some union people, former strikers, into his mills and could doubtless be counted on to continue the same "friendly" attitude toward union members wishing to return to work.

On the strength of some such vague discussion the friendly business man helped Vice President Frank Gorman frame a vague statement, which the latter actually read to the strikers, to the effect that the only reason why the strike was undertaken in the first place was that the mill management was discriminating against its employees "because of union membership." But "in taking old employees back into the mill in considerable numbers without raising the question of union membership" Mr. Fitzgerald has recently given evidence that he now respects the principle of labor's right to organize! "With this fundamental principle no longer questioned" the union leaders "feel that the necessity for this strike no longer exists and members of the union are called upon to return to their work as promptly as places may be found for them." The amazing statement ends with an insulting and sickening appeal to the kindness and good-will of the employer who brutally and callously starved his workers into submission. It is hoped that the gentleman will accept the abandonment of the strike by the union "as a measure of confidence and trust, which in time may become mutual and enable employer and employee to view their problems eye to eye."

The aftermath is what might have been expected. Few strikers have been taken back. The Red Cross has been summoned to relieve the worst distress "among the unemployed." The Danville workers who put up such a noble struggle for their union are overwhelmed with confusion and dismay.

The Danville settlement is the same kind of sad affair as the one at Elizabethton in 1929 where the U. T. W. accepted the personnel manager of the company as the impartial (God save the mark) arbitrator in cases of alleged discrimination against former strikers. The U. T. W. leaders later admitted publicly that in that case they had been duped. Why did they have to walk into the same kind of trap again? In the Elizabethton case, too, kind words were spoken by the union officials of employers who had re-

tused the most elementary justice to their employees. So now in Danville Gorman talks of "confidence and trust" in Czar Fitzgerald, persecutor of U. T. W. members, and President McMahon actually has words of praise for Fitzgerald's "conduct during the strike," if press reports which called forth no denial can be trusted.

We say, deliberately and in the full consciousness of the import of our words, that it is impossible for intelligent and honest people to have any confidence in such a stupid, weak-minded, lick-the-bosses-boots policy. It is impossible any longer to stand by in silence while it leads textile workers, South and North, to destruction.



THE leading article in the *American Teacher*, official journal of the American Federation of Teachers, for February, is by Joseph Jablonower, first vice-president of

### Danger Signals in Local Unions

Local No. 5, New York City. Brother Jablonower thinks that he discerns in some of the locals of the

teachers' union tendencies which in his opinion should at least be understood in order that the members may know whether they want to continue in the course or change the line of motion. He detects, in the first place, a tendency: for the leadership to move away from the rank and file. "This state of things," he says, "is accompanied by two very unfortunate by-products: first, that the organization will not attract to itself a growing membership because it is not calling people to action, and second, that those who do join the organization because only of the practical benefits which it promises, do so in the same sterile spirit in which they would take out a policy with a sound insurance company. In such cases the organization loses its creative possibilities even though it may show growth in numbers."

In the second place, he thinks that some of the locals are becoming "practical" and on this tendency he comments: "The tendency to place the getting of immediate results before all else leads individuals and groups to discard the idealism that is the promise of their youth for what may prove to be a sorry mess of pottage. Practical achievements tempt because they are tangible. The vocabulary of idealism is particularly suspect now, in this day of human engineering and measuring. We will not be called visionaries, so we divest ourselves of vision."

Finally, he notes a tendency to "collaboration" with school authorities and politicians, which tends to tie up the organization with the status quo in the schools and in society generally. "It is reasonable that in efforts to achieve practical reforms and to obtain tangible results, officers and administrators of organizations collaborate with officials of school systems. It is well that they do so. Such collaboration reveals to each side the point of view of the other and develops in each an understanding of the whole of the problem on which it is working. But collaboration does not always stop at this point. One of our locals is now on the rocks because, in part, at least, its officers fraternized with city officials, with whom, as the event proved, to fraternize was to stoop too low, no matter how great the gain."

It is very apparent that the points which Brother Jablonower raises and on which he comments in so fresh and direct a fashion arise in connection with the policies of other unions than the teachers and in connection with the whole policy of the American labor movement. It is for this reason that we have thought it well to quote at length from this important utterance.



Drawn for Labor Age by Jerger

# WASHINGTON VIEWS THE PRESENT SLUMP AS A "GRAVE SITUATION"—News Note

A dilly-dallying Congress evidently approves this charming and highly efficient method of "definitely" disposing of the unemployed!

# Hard Times Hit Detroit's Auto Workers

By A DETROITER



*Rise of the Auto Industry---What Has Happened to Its Capital City*

**B**EFORE the war, the automobile industry was still in its swaddling clothes. Production was gradually increasing but not to such an extent as to captivate the imagination of the investing public. The motor car had not as yet attained its present popularity. The average worker was not receiving sufficient remuneration to equip himself with a flivver. Then the war came. Automobile factories were converted into munition plants. While the boys were spilling their blood on the poppy-grown fields of Flanders, the motor magnates were receiving fat, juicy contracts from the government; contracts, which permitted them to overhaul their factories—to replace worn-out machinery with new and more labor-saving equipment. With the coming of peace, the automobile magnates had plenty of cash and modern industrial plants ready to be turned into the production of motor cars. Henry Ford, that great philanthropist, built a huge factory on the banks of the Rouge River at government expense. The pathetic Lelands, father and son, persuaded the government in the name of liberty to erect a plant for the production of Liberty motors, and, when peace came, bought it for a song and used it to produce Lincoln cars.

In short, the motor industry was in excellent shape not only to produce cars within the reach of the average man's pocketbook but to popularize the use of motor cars. The automobile industry, which was of relatively small importance before the great "war for democracy," had attained a commanding position among the great manufacturing industries of the country. In 1925 the value of products of the automobile industry exceeded that of any other industry. In 1913 the production of passenger cars and trucks in the U. S. was 485,000 and in 1920 it had reached the staggering total of 2,227,300, an increase of 600 per cent.

Orders came pouring in. During the years following the war, it was necessary to wait several months before delivery could be made. The magnates become millionaires, and in

some cases, billionaires. The 21 manufacturers in the automobile group, not including the Ford Motor Co., in 1928 made a net profit of \$399,136,000 on a capital and surplus of the beginning of the year aggregating \$1,430,648,000, or a return of 27.9 per cent, as compared with an average return of 12.1 per cent of all corporate industry in that year.

## *Calling for Labor*

With a phenomenal increase in productivity came a shortage of labor. The automobile companies sent labor agents, south, east and west. The farms, mountains and plantations were drained of their labor. Gawk mountaineers, timid plantation workers and stolid plough hands were persuaded to come to Detroit, the paradise of labor, where wages were high and jobs plentiful. In 1914, the average number of wage earners in the automobile industry was 127,092 and in 1919 it rose to the amazing figure of 343,115. Ford, with his excellent press service, broadcasted to the entire world that he paid the highest wages; that his workers were the most contented and that the conditions under which they worked were ideal. Of course, the U. S. Department of Labor had not as yet investigated the budgets of his workers, and had not as yet discovered that in 1929 his workers had an average total income of \$1,711.87, and an average expenditure of \$1,719.83, leaving an average deficit for all families of \$7.96.

As a consequence Detroit's negro population is now 120,000; the southern drawl is as common as in Arkansas and the mark of the hayseed is as common as in Podunk. We are all aliens in Detroit, the motor city.

In most of the branches of the industry, skill was not necessary. As Ford pointed out in one of his recent books, 43 per cent of all jobs in his plants required not over one day of training, 36 per cent from one day to one week, 6 per cent from one to two

weeks, 14 per cent from one month to a year and 1 per cent from one to six years. It appears then that 85 per cent of his workers could learn their tasks within one month.

The mountaineer, within a few hours, was turned into a competent lathe—milling machine or drill press operator. Strength and vitality were more important than intelligence. The conveyor system placed a premium upon youth. To secure a job a thick bicep and a healthy, corn-fed look were the passwords. However, unfortunately for the motor magnates, there were certain processes that still necessitated the use of skilled labor. It was extremely difficult to teach a farm hand to trim, paint, bump or finish automobile bodies within a few hours. The work was too fine. As a consequence, those employed in this type of work became the aristocrats of automobile labor. It was common for a body bumper or trimmer to earn \$18-\$20 a day. Using bonuses and piece-work rates as incentives, these workers were speeded up to a high degree. With good wages, they became somewhat arrogant and were not as docile as is expected of American workers. They would not hesitate to lay off for a day or two for dismissal to them meant nothing. Jobs were too plentiful to make the discharged worker concerned about the future. Something had to be done to curb their spirit. The magnates bided their time.

As the industry became more stabilized, much money was spent in inventing machines which would displace these skilled workers. The duco sprayer mechanized the painting of automobile bodies. By means of an electric welding process rear quarter body panels can now be welded together by an unskilled man at the rate of 60 welds per man per hour, whereas, previously, a skilled man using the torch method did only 12 in the same period. A machine for manufacturing pressed steel frames, operated by



one man, now produces six frames or more per minute or 3,600 in 10 hours. Formerly, to accomplish this production by the hand method required 175 men. Many other examples can be given. Labor-saving devices were being installed gradually, until the day arrived when the magnates decided to strike. Piece-work rates were cut, bonuses were eliminated. The happy days were over. Jobs were not so plentiful and skill was not essential. It required a full day's work to earn \$7-\$8 a day. The workers rebelled. An epidemic of strikes swept over the industry in Detroit. Whereas in the good old days, union agitators were treated with scorn, they now become popular. The Auto Workers' Union, also known as the United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers of America, an independent industrial union, was swamped with membership applications. Formerly known as the Carriage, Wagon and Automobile Workers' International Union and affiliated with the A. F. of L., because of the antagonism of a number of craft unions, it could not continue to function as an integral part of the Federation. Its charter was revoked in 1918 because of its refusal to strike the word "automobile" from its title. Expulsion did not seem to affect its popularity with the rebellious workers.

Within a few months, the membership roster of this union rose to over 12,000 in Detroit and nearly 28,000 in the entire country. Hope was in the air. Those were the days when the boys thought that the revolution was around the corner and what better evidence was there in support of that belief than the apparent class conscious spirit prevalent amongst the auto workers. Radicals by the score became active in the affairs of the union.

### **Decline of the Auto Workers' Union**

Although here and there, a small factory capitulated, the big boys kept on rationalizing their plants and importing scab labor. The strikes were lost; the Auto Workers' Union was reduced to a shadow organization, and the men went back to work at reduced wages and upon the terms of the employers. Since then, with the exception of a sporadic revolt in Pontiac and Flint, the automobile workers have remained quiet—very quiet. True, the Auto Workers' Union is still in existence, but its membership is less than one hundred. Whether it will under its present Communist

leadership succeed in organizing the workers remains to be seen. Most of its members are very sincere and courageous individuals but courage is not enough in this fight.

With increased productivity of the industry and the sudden influx of hundreds and thousands of workers, a shortage of homes developed. Rents were boosted to an unheard of height by avaricious landlords. Real estate values soared skywards. A real estate boom was on. Millions were made in real estate speculation. Farms, miles from the Detroit City Hall were subdivided and lots sold to these new workers. Emphasis upon home ownership was stressed by all organs of thought conveyance. With their high wages, many of these newcomers pictured themselves as home owners, the proprietors of little bungalows with yards big enough for the kiddies to play, and, of course, a garage to house that new car. A spending orgy developed. Credit was extended to workers. Many little towns sprang up overnight, populated entirely by home owning workers; Lincoln Park, Hazel Park, East Detroit, Clawson and many other such Detroit suburbs.

It only required a few hundred dollars down and the rest like rent to change a worker from a renter into a respectable property owning member of society, a taxpayer, if you will. Of course, he did not realize then, that the shack sold him was inflated highly in value, that the materials used to construct it were cheap and shoddy; that it would take him about twenty years to pay what he owned on the house he so proudly called "his'n" and finally that if he defaulted in one payment he would lose his mansion including the money he paid into it. Over 125,000 workers, it is estimated, have already lost their homes during the present depression.

The boom naturally created a demand for building workers. The building trade unions took advantage of the situation and managed to build up their membership. The Employers were so busy that they could not afford a protracted battle with these unions, especially when certain methods, not mentioned in the text book, were resorted to by both sides. Furthermore, a large number of the contractors were little fellows, beginners, as it were, and not able to put up much of a battle. The unions were more interested in job control than in attempting to organize all building workers. When they arrived at the point where jobs could be procured

for most if not all their members, they refused to take in the unorganized building tradesman. They became exclusive. As a matter of fact it was necessary to resort to influence and the liberal expenditure of money in order to be accepted as a member by a certain building trade union. And it was only in 1922 that this very union was extremely anxious to take in all comers. They treated the unorganized worker as a scab but when this scab wanted to be regular, his application was turned down.

Not only did these unions refuse to take in the unorganized worker but they also refused to co-operate with each other. Many a strike was lost because the members of one union sabotaged the members of another, and the members of one working while the members of another were outside picketing the job. The larger and more important contractors have waged a pitiless fight with union labor.

### **"The Citizens' Committee"**

Their mouthpiece, the Citizens' Committee, which is also sponsored and fully supported by the Detroit Chamber of Commerce and which has as its object "to maintain the American plan of Employment in Detroit," has made it possible for Detroit to enjoy an open shop reputation.

The contractors have always believed in a united front but unfortunately the unions, whose strength lies in unity and co-operation from each other, have not taken advantage of the many opportunities presenting themselves. As a result, Detroit building workers have not succeeded in doing as well for themselves as their brothers in New York, Chicago and Cleveland. These building trade unions, together with the typographical machinist and a few miscellaneous unions constitute the Detroit Federation of Labor.

The membership of the unions affiliated with the Detroit Federation of Labor almost tripled during that boom period. Politicians fell over themselves trying to get into the good grace of the labor leaders. Before the Volstead Act became effective, Detroit was more or less controlled by the Royal Ark, a saloon-keepers' organization. However, with the coming of prohibition, machine politics was dealt a death blow. It was very difficult to determine who had the votes and who could deliver them effectively. Believing that labor always votes in a solid bloc, these as-

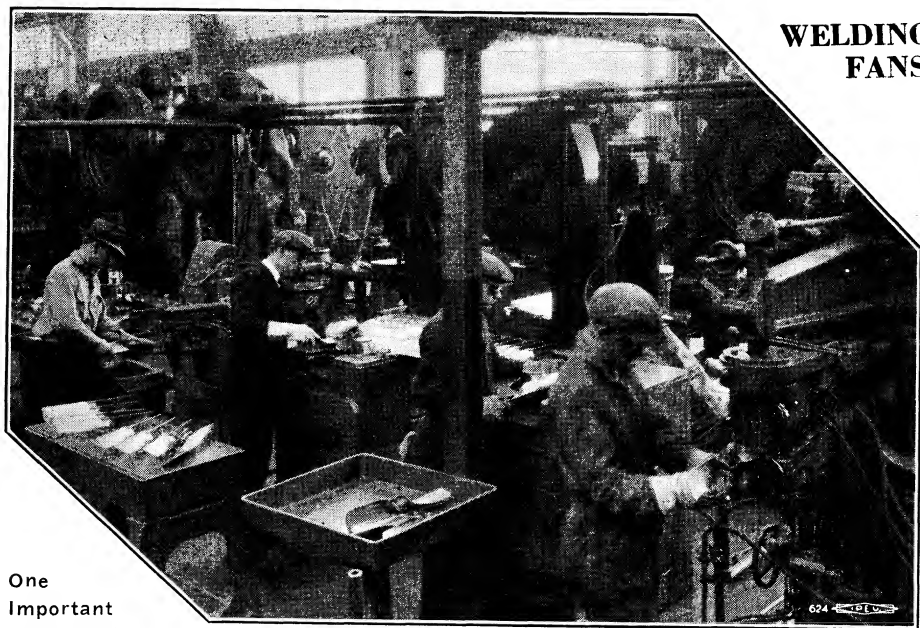
piring job seekers visualized twenty thousand votes lying around the vest pockets of its leaders. Naturally agreements were made; promises were given and in the case of those aspiring to wear the royal ermin, it meant that in the future when a union man fell into the clutches of the law, especially while in an intoxicated condition, he would not have to spend all night in the company of bums and other disreputable members of society.

At first, this power was used solely for union men, but gradually, when certain labor leaders realized that prohibition violators, prostitutes and gamblers were willing to pay handsome sums to those who would make it possible for their immediate release when arrested, they took advantage of the opportunity. Money came in fast and easy. Alley whiskey was then selling as high as \$15.00 a gallon and fortunes were made overnight in that new industry. Labor leaders began consorting with gangsters, pimps and bootleggers. As soon as certain members of the underworld were arrested, a friendly judge was reached and the police notified to release the prisoner until the following morning. An alliance was therefore made between trade unionism and the underworld.

The alliance continued for some time. However, the bootlegging business became stabilized. It was much cheaper to bribe police officials than to be arrested and pay fixers handsomely to be released. The bootleggers became so powerful that it was not necessary for them to use middlemen to reach certain politicians. Business for these labor leaders began dropping off. Some new source of revenue had to be discovered.

### The Dyeing and Cleaning Blot

Someone conceived the idea of organizing all the small cleaning and repairing shops into a union affiliated with the Detroit Federation of Labor. Naturally a large number of these merchants were not eager to become members of this proposed union. Argument and logic had no appreciable effect upon their apathetic attitude towards organization. Some other weapon had to be used. Imitating Chicago, the organizers of this union engaged the services of their underworld friends, who, with the liberal use of stench bombs and other malodorous missiles, made it possible for this merchant union to develop rapidly. The entire affair forms a



One Important Operation in the Making of "Open Shop" Autos

Courtesy Labor Research Association

sordid chapter in the history of the Detroit labor movement.

It later developed that these underworld thugs were also used by the wholesale cleaning and dyeing plants to crush this union. A number of men were killed. Sometime later, a very prominent trade union official was tried for extortion but fortunately acquitted by a jury. The complaining witness was the head of the largest cleaning plant in the city.

The Detroit Federation of Labor also helped to organize jitney drivers, men who owned automobiles for hire and who in order to remain on the streets of Detroit paid tribute to a prominent attorney and his labor allies: kosher butchers, bread wagon drivers and other petty merchants. At no time was there any serious effort made by the Detroit Federation of Labor to organize the great mass of automobile workers.

It is true that the American Federation of Labor did make a gesture in that direction. In 1926 when the American Federation of Labor held its convention in Detroit, a resolution was passed calling for "a conference of all national and international organizations interested in the automobile industry for the purpose of working out details to inaugurate a general organizing campaign among the workers of that industry." The A. F. of L. intended to show Ford, Sloan, Macauley and other motor magnates that their employes could and would be organized. All predicted a battle between giants. In one corner was

the A. F. of L., and in the other, Billionaire Ford and his friends. An organizer was sent to Detroit and upon his arrival he invited 17 A. F. of L. craft unions claiming jurisdiction over auto workers to a conference to agree upon a line of policy. This conference was held on December 1, 1926 and it was then decided to again convene the representatives of the various interested international unions with the recommendation that each of these representatives have full authority to waive all jurisdictional claims.

### One Auto Union?

At this conference it seemed extremely difficult to convince some of the delegates that the auto workers, before they could be effectively organized, would have to be taken into one union in order to wage an effective fight against their employers. However, it was agreed to refer the question of jurisdiction to the respective unions, and at the second meeting it was hoped that the various differences would be ironed out. This second conference was held on March 24, 1927 when it was decided to suspend jurisdictional claims for the workers engaged in all the so-called "repetitive" and unskilled processes in the plants so that temporary local labor unions might be formed for them, directly affiliated with the A. F. of L. The national Federation was to appoint a leader to direct the work in the campaign. The other craft unions were to co-operate in conduct-

(Continued on Page 29)

# Why Don't You Organize?

## An Answer

By JOHN P. BURKE

‡ *Practical Problems Facing Unions*

‡ *High Cost of Organizing*

‡ *A Plea for Sympathetic Understanding*

**T**HE pulp and paper industry in the United States, Canada, and Newfoundland employs approximately one hundred and fifty thousand workers. These one hundred and fifty thousand workers, if they but knew it, occupy a strategic position in American industrial life, because paper is a prime essential, a daily necessity, of twentieth century civilization. If these pulp and paper workers were thoroughly organized, they could exert a power and an influence all out of proportion to their numbers.

But why have these workers not built up powerful and influential labor organizations throughout the years? To the casual observer it would appear as if the task of organizing one hundred and fifty thousand workers in a virtual key industry ought not to be such a difficult undertaking. Those outside of our ranks often ask me, as the president of one of the international unions in this industry, questions such as these: Why has not your union a larger membership? Why are there two international unions in the pulp and paper industry? Why is not your organization more progressive? Why don't you do this? Why don't you do that? And why not something else again? My purpose in writing this article is to try to answer some of these numerous "whys."

Let me say at the outset that the task of organizing American labor has never been, and is not now, an easy one. Before labor organizations can be perfected in any industry there must be a keen desire on the part of a considerable number in that particular industry for an organization. American workers have never had such a strong desire for organization as have the workers of some other countries, for the simple reason that the necessity of organizing has not been so great in this country as in others. Labor unions are born of the needs of the workers. Economic necessity brings them into existence and keeps them alive.

Some thirty or thirty-five years ago a portion of the workers in the pulp

and paper industry felt the need for organizing. Pulp and paper mills operate the full twenty-four hours. At that time the two tour system of twelve hours each prevailed in the mills. Wages were very low. Working conditions were frightfully bad. Accidents were frequent. Foremen were overbearing and brutal. Out of such conditions as these the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers was born. Some years later came the formation of the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers. Prior to the founding of the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers, the workers coming under its jurisdiction were members of the International Brotherhood of Paper makers.

There was but one charter recognized by the American Federation of Labor at that time. However, friction developed between the skilled paper makers and the men of lesser skill, which finally resulted in the secession of the pulp and sulphite workers from the parent body and the formation of an organization of their own.

### 12-Hour Day Abolished

These two organizations have waged a magnificent fight during the past thirty years to improve the lot of the toilers in this industry. The twelve-hour day has been abolished. In its place has come the three-tour system of eight hours each. Here and there the six-hour day is being introduced. Wages have trebled and quadrupled. Working conditions have been revolutionized in the mills. Non-union mills have followed, to some extent, this march of progress, in most instances inaugurating these changes to prevent their workers from organizing. Therefore, when our organizers today go to the workers in non-union mills and talk organization, they find it hard to convince these workers that they should become members of the labor unions, because they are enjoying some of the benefits of organization without having done any of the work of organizing, without having to pay any dues, and without hav-

ing to make any sacrifices. In short, the great mass of the unorganized workers today will not organize for the reason that the activity of the unions have freed them from that economic pressure that makes workers organize.

The young man who enters the paper industry today finds conditions ready-made for him by the labor pioneers. He steps into an eight-hour day job. He earns good wages right from the start. In many instances, because of modern machinery, his job is insecure, and, consequently, he sees no great need for spending any portion of his time at union meetings or paying any of his money for union dues.

Of course, what has just been cited applies with equal force to unions in all industries. However, the pulp and paper industry presents difficulties of its own that seriously handicap the work of trade union officials. To build a paper mill requires a great outlay of capital. The owners of this industry are men of large financial backing. Trustification of this industry began before the unions secured a strong foothold. Strikes in this industry have been bitterly fought by the employers because they had the money to withstand a long siege. The last important strike of this organization, which was against the International Paper Company in 1921, lasted more than four years. It cost the International Paper Company more than eighteen million dollars. The company, however, was finally able to operate its mills successfully with strikebreakers, and then the strike had to be called off. Daily meetings of strikers were held in some of these strike towns for more than four years. For the first six months of this strike not a single man of the eight thousand strikers broke ranks, and for the first year of the strike, a mere handful went back to work in the mills. We have not been able to get any great foothold in any of these mills since, because most of the strikers are still out of these mills, the mills being manned by those who took their places during the strike.

## Isolation of Mills

In the paper industry we are tremendously handicapped by the isolation of many of the mills. The paper industry requires two things in abundance—water power and a supply of spruce and hemlock wood. This has resulted in the building of modern mills in far-away Newfoundland and in the northern sections of Canada. Organizing local unions in these isolated places is a difficult and costly undertaking; and the time required to reach these towns is a serious handicap in taking care of the locals after they are once organized.

In the Province of Quebec the bulk of the workers in the mills are French speaking. The priesthood of their church are bitterly opposed to the international labor unions. Every time we start an organizing campaign we are denounced with a great virulence from the altar, and the faithful are warned to have nothing to do with us. Not only do the Catholic priesthood fight us verbally from the altar, but they have organized a union of their own which they call "The National Catholic Union." I have never been able to understand how a union can be national and Catholic at the same time, but that is the title given this organization in the Province of Quebec.

It is a far cry and a long way from French-speaking Province of Quebec to the southern states of the United States. The paper mill unions have to face these contrasts. In recent years there have been many paper mills built in southern states, manufacturing kraft paper for paper bags. The majority of these mills are owned by the International Paper Company. This company is a six hundred million dollar concern. It owns great modern newsprint mills at Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Three Rivers and Gatineau, Quebec, and Dalhousie, New Brunswick. It owns kraft paper mills in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Florida. This company owns power plants, street railways, saw mills and what not. Let me assure the readers of LABOR AGE that it requires more than the passing of radical resolutions to organize the thousands of workers scattered all over a great continent, working in the mills of the International Paper Company.

## The Automobile vs. Unionism

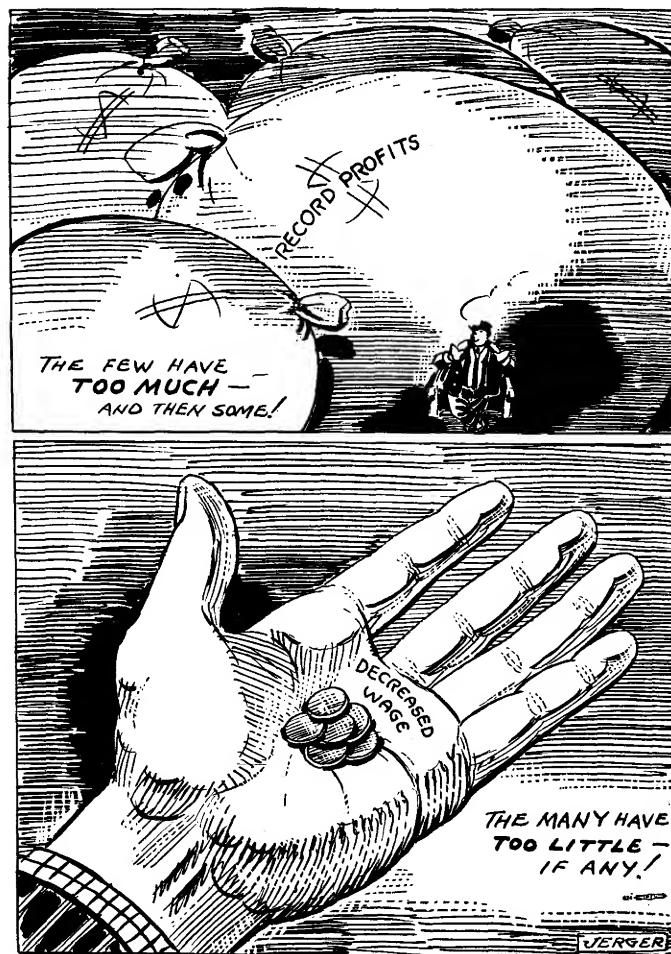
I wonder how many readers of LABOR AGE realize what a revolutionizing factor the automobile has been in American life and how it has added tremendously to the problem of organizing. The automobile exerts pe-

culiar fascination over the average working man. Not only has it emptied our union halls on meeting nights, but it enables the workers to live miles from their place of employment. Working men do not have to live in the towns where they work as they did formerly. The result is that when organizers come to organize a mill they find that the workers do not know each other any more. Some live in one town, some in another, and some of these towns are twenty and thirty miles from the place of employment. The worker comes to work in his automobile, works his eight hours, jumps into his car at the end of his shift, and goes his individual way. The automobile has made American working men more individualistic than ever before. This fact—and it is a fact—militates seriously against the progress of the labor movement.

Every close observer of American life has noticed a deplorable letdown of moral standards since the close of the World's War. One of the results of this changed morality is that the odium that used to go with strike-breaking does not exist to the extent it formerly did. This change in working class ethics is an important factor that must be reckoned with in future strikes. No strong and virile labor movement can be built from a working class whose moral fibre has been so perverted that strike-breaking is accepted with toleration.

These are a few of the difficulties with which the officers and active members of our unions in the paper industry have to contend. However we are not discouraged or disheartened. We are not asking for sympathy, but we do appreciate understanding on the part of our friends both inside and outside of the labor movement.

If we are not making the progress



Drawn for Labor Age by Jerger  
AND STILL THEY DON'T ORGANIZE!

that we should it is not because our officers are highly paid racketeers or our organizers are inefficient and lazy. It is not because we are too conservative. It is not failure to adopt such and such a policy or program or resolution. As a matter of fact, our organization at some time or other has adopted nearly all of the stock resolutions that would classify us as a progressive union. Many of the most serious problems are impersonal ones. They have to do with such things as the time required to go from Fort Edward, New York to Corner Brook, Newfoundland and the amount of money it takes to send an organizer to Orange, Texas; Panama City, Florida, or Camas, Washington; or the shutting down of union mills in New York, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont because they have been competed out of existence by non-union mills with more modern equipment in Alabama or British Columbia.

Therefore I say let there be sympathetic understanding of the difficult problems that harass trade union officials, and out of that understanding let there come a spirit of cooperation.

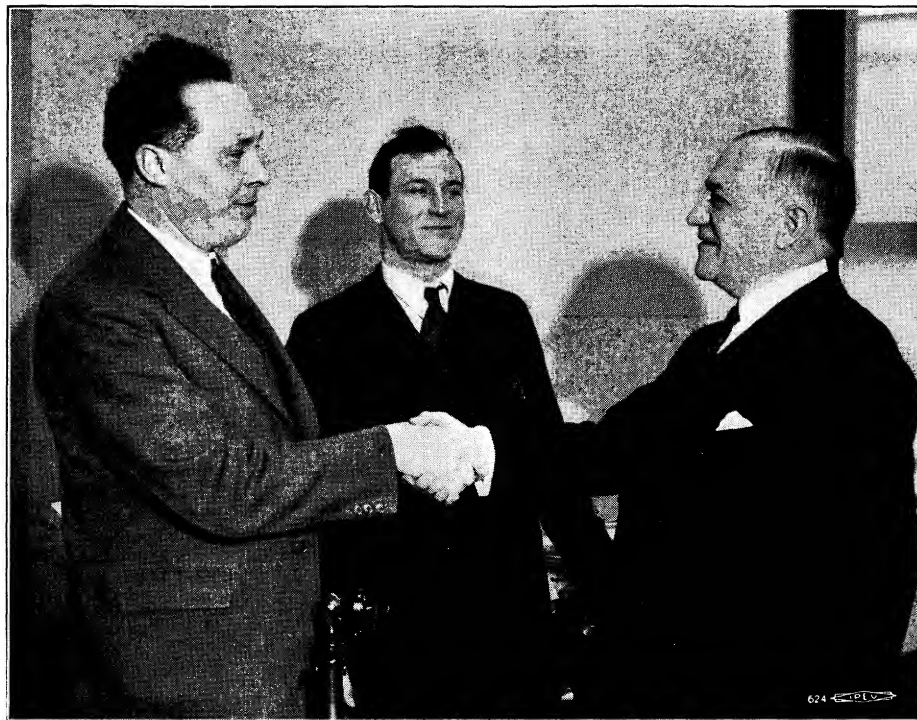


# The Story of The Stuffed Shirt

By ISRAEL MUFSON

FROM the most august Senator moving majestically through the zigzagging passageways on Capitol Hill to the humblest government clerk, of whom there are legions, coursing through the streets during off-hours in every make of second-hand rattler, the nation's capital presents nothing so much as a third rate department store putting up a first class front. Everything is organized to impress the eye. Very little is there to impress the mind. Even the facades of white marble which dazzle the visitor stretching their correct lines from the Capitol to Lincoln's Monument, emphasize the store-front aspect of Washington. "Dressing Up" seems to be the chief vocation of those caught in the network of the nation's greatest camouflage. Behind their frontal setup is the physical and mental poverty which characterize all ostentatious grandeur. The stuffed shirt glistens over the dirty linen underneath.

Only the most hopelessly gullible need be dazzled, however. One sitting in the visitor's gallery in either of the chambers, while oratory flows on almost every issue of no importance, is sufficient to dispel the earlier illusions of solid greatness. While outside where folks must live by the normal intercourse of man, where even Washington cannot entirely cover up demands for bread, screaming signs cajole the populace to open its purse to the poverty funds so that the hungry may be fed in some fashion, inside pages continue to run back and forth with papers and documents and volumes to supply the battery of orators with ammunition, to shoot phantom ghosts of



Israel Mufson and Cal Bellaver Greeted by Senator Robert F. Wagner (Right) in Washington As They Leave on Their Coast to Coast Tour.

no consequence and of less substance. There statesmen are still concerned more with dotting i's and crossing t's than they are with the vital problems of the living which clamor for attention. One hour, two hours, hours without number are consumed in piling up statistics on prohibition, on fisheries and on the length of rivers and harbors. Vital things, of course, but there is hunger abroad, there is the kind of despair that American people have never yet experienced, there is an orgy of wage cutting and beating down of labor that make Russia's supposedly forced labor policy pale into insignificance. These things never reach Washington. Only as distance lengthens away from the shores of the Potomac can reality find some abiding place in the minds of men.

But false fronts are not the prerogatives of politicians and government functionaries only. The same sort of marble facades, though more modest, which conceal behind their immaculate fronts the sordidness of the present situation, stand guard against an honest evaluation of the power, prestige and resourcefulness of organized labor as well. Like the memorials to history which tower in their splendor across the expansive mall, stand also the memorials to the organized workers within the capital city. Proud buildings, gleaming white in the unobstructed sunlight of an early season, give visual evidence of labor's affluence.

Large and well appointed offices, thickly carpeted, are eloquent testimonials to the rise in standards to which those delegated to direct our labor forces, have become accustomed. Short interviews with these, as they sit behind the glass-topped desks, bring immediate realization, though, that the buildings and their inner finery are also but memorials to a vitality and spirit which are fast disappearing, if they have not already done so.

## "Patience, Patience"

"Patience, patience, things cannot be achieved over night," was the admonition of one who today is at the forefront of the array of intellectual labor talent. "I have gone all through it," he continued to lecture, as if to college boys engaged in a prank. "Every young man of spirit must go through it. But in the end you will know that your action is based upon ignorance of facts as it is on your impatience with the orderly processes of accomplishment," he added for good measure.

We thanked him for his compliment in his reference to youth and pointed to our graying hair in an attempt at refutation, though unsuccessfully. If he only would have cared to leave the warm comfort of his marble sepulchre to face the workers in their heatless and breadless homes or on the soup lines, he could have been forgiven for his smugness. If he could have only shown a growing labor force as

the virtue of his patience his advice would have had a truer ring.

The answer to this plea for patience unexpectedly came from another source, however. "We are getting along splendidly," was the cheerful rejoinder of another oracle behind another glass-topped desk. "We lost only a few thousand members during the past year. In the face of the present depression this is an excellent record." How many members the organization he represents gained during the immediate preceding years of great prosperity he did not choose to state.

Thus stand the temples of labor, shining marble shirt fronts of action and effectiveness. No dynamic movement need ever seek the atmosphere of false bravado which characterizes Washington. Only they who have a certain past and a doubtful future can afford to find contentment behind these glowing facades of concealment.

So into the Ford and away. The balmy climate of the capital, (even the weather is untrue to its season here), changes for the more invigorating air of the provinces further north. As the miles zoom past the night air turns colder and less calm. There is a stir through the openings in the rumbling auto. Little eddies of snowflakes dance a merry round across the polished concrete road surface. Baltimore, Philadelphia, Allentown, and Utica come closer and closer. They are already behind and Buffalo looms on the horizon. And as the distance shortens the problems of living, so easily forgotten between the facades of white marble and among the stuffed shirts behind them, grow in stature and reality.

### Workers "Must Sacrifice"

Workers earning six and eight dollars a week are told that their further sacrifice is necessary to bring back prosperity and so their wages, if such meager compensation can be called wages, are slashed again.

"I told them not to be afraid of the boss," one little fiery-eyed rebel explained in indignation, referring to her fellow workers' slavish acceptance of the lowered standards. "Come on out and let the boss do the work himself for this kind of pay. But they all are afraid the other one will take the job." Straight through from Baltimore to Buffalo the story is the same. They who talked so glibly just a season back about the high wage theory maintaining prosperity indefinitely are the first to prove themselves the greatest of liars. There is no bottom low enough to stop the wages from falling.

Hunger stalks the land for those who work as well as for the millions of idle. Charity is bankrupt in the face of this great catastrophe. Stuffed shirts proclaim all arrangements satisfactory, attempting to stifle protest amid loud shouts of wonder-working for the relief of the suffering. The first thing a stranger hears on entering Buffalo is the boast that no bread lines exist in the city. Established relief is adequate to take care of every one at home. A walk on Broadway, past the Volunteers of America and the City Mission proves this boast as unreliable as all the others. A sign on the door of the Volunteers, "Soup and Coffee, 4 P. M.," brings the poverty-stricken in batches to lounge around the entrance until it is opened. It is no bread line. It is just a group of unemployed waiting for a bowl of soup. That's the difference.

Of Buffalo's 45-60,000 unemployed, between three and four thousand crowd the employment section quarters of the City's Department of Social Welfare every morning in the vain hope of finding something to do. About ninety of these are given some temporary employment daily. The rest must go home with the hope that tomorrow will bring better luck. The state employment agency handles still more applicants for jobs. In normal times about 250 workers register daily at the city's employment offices.

"Do those who obtain employment receive the wages customarily paid for the jobs performed?" was the question asked of the individual in charge.

"No, not now. The wages offered today are always lower than the rate before the present depression," was the reply. "Women especially are hit hard. If they are 35 years of age they cannot find work at all any more."

The best citizens of Buffalo have established a rate of five dollars a week to be paid to each unemployed family. This is handed out by the city, not in cash, but in groceries. The recipient is thrice crucified. First he must register every week with the social welfare department and have his unemployment card punched. Then he must appear at another office to obtain a slip of paper entitling him to the groceries. He then can present this slip to the grocery store for his supplies.

Public sentiment is greatly aroused against these conditions. Liberal folk realize the sordidness of this sort of an arrangement in dealing with an emergency that threatens to become permanent and tremendous interest in favor of unemployment insurance is

## Coast to Coast Tour Itinerary

The schedule of Mufson and Bel-laver in their Coast to Coast Tour, for the months of March and early April, runs as follows:

City	Date of Arrival
Pittsburgh — —	Sunday, March 1
Youngstown — —	Thursday, March 5
Warren — —	Thursday, March 5
Cleveland — —	Saturday, March 7
Toledo — — —	Saturday, March 14
Detroit — — —	Sunday, March 15
Lima — — —	Friday, March 20
Columbus — —	Sunday, March 22
Yellow Springs, — —	Tuesday, March 24
Dayton — —	Wednesday, March 25
Cincinnati — —	Friday, March 27
Indianapolis — —	Sunday, April 5
Chicago — — —	Tuesday, April 7

Further dates in other cities can be arranged on application to the C. P. L. A. office, 104 Fifth Ave., New York City.

developing. In every community the thinking sections are holding meetings discussing not so much whether unemployment insurance is necessary but what plan, among all those presented, is to be adopted. The opportunity for discussing the fundamental issues involved were never as adequate as at present. Even Chambers of Commerce are willing to listen to a better method of relief than those of charity.

What stands out as lacking in this period of intense agitation is a Labor Movement that has a program and anxious to supply the leadership in its realization. There are a dozen industries that can be struck tomorrow if the workers in them had the assurance of some sort of help from without. There are numberless groups of people in every community who would go the limit in the support of workers fighting wage cuts and deteriorating standards.

But the Labor Movement is satisfactorily ensconced behind its marble facades, exorcising action and urging patience. The Labor Movement sings lullabys along the Potomac while workers freeze in the warmth of its leadership.

Plainly, whatever unity among workers can be achieved for rebellious action against the slavery of 1931 must depend on the C. P. L. A.

# NEW INDUSTRIES INVADE THE BAY STATE

*And How the Workers  
Fare Therefrom . . . .*

**By RUTH SHALLCROSS**

**I**N recent years the Massachusetts textile industry has allowed the southern mills to win out in the cut-throat game of competition in a flooded market because it has not kept up with the times in changing methods of production. It has not scrapped machinery to meet rayon demands when cotton demands were decreasing and it has declared dividends up to the point of liquidation. Because of this losing game, mill after mill in Massachusetts has had to shut its gates, thereby throwing out of employment hundreds of workers whose lives have been centered around the textile industry. In these one-industry towns the mercantile establishments and other industries arising to meet the needs of a community have depended upon the wages of the mill workers for their very existence. So with a slow liquidation of the mills came the cry of the other industries of the towns for new productive industries.

Thus the Chambers of Commerce in such towns as Lawrence, Fall River, and New Bedford, formed so-called "new-industry committees" and advertised in New York and Boston papers. The NEW YORK TIMES, February, 1930 advertised, "a fifteen to twenty-five per cent saving in labor costs" and the BOSTON TRAVELER, June 21, 1930 advertised, "a large reservoir of labor, proper fuel rates, good power supplies and an ideal transportation centre."

In most cases the new industries have consisted of garment shops, radio and electrical equipment factories, rubber and leather companies. The garment industry consists mostly of contract shops for low priced dresses, boys suits, shirts and underwear, many of them being sweat shops which have been run out of New York City by enforced labor laws, militant union activity, and a prevailing wage rate which is above the rate accepted by a starving force of mill labor in a one-industry town. The Chambers of Commerce have met the industries at the depot, and welcomed them into their towns with a hospitality mingled with fear, fear that if they did not acquiesce in every proposal the guests

made that the guests would depart on the next train. Labor has welcomed the new industries as a sheep would a wolf when it is forced to treat the wolf with kindness in order to save its very life, yet knowing that the wolf is going to eat it at the first opportunity.

What has the new-industry wolf done to labor? First, it has decreased wages to the starvation level and has been praised by the local Chamber of Commerce for doing so. In Lawrence, the SUN lauded the Pilot Radio Tube Corporation of Brooklyn, New York, for its efforts in bringing prosperity to the town by planning a "\$50,000 payroll for 5,000 workers," prosperity at the rate of \$10 a week per person! Yet that was an increase over the prosperity the company first brought at the rate of \$7.50 per week. In Fall River the new Lucky Boy Company, manufacturers of boys' pants, forced inexperienced workers to work three days for nothing and then put them on a \$5.00 a week rate with the prospect of being raised to \$6 or \$7 in a few months. Experienced girls begin at \$8 a week. The minimum wage law decrees that experienced workers should receive a minimum of \$12 or \$13.75 a week, depending upon the length of service in the particular shop. Last July the wages paid averaged thirty-seven per cent below the requirements of the law. The same decree applies to the Sally Middy Company also of Fall River, yet the payroll of the week in which I worked in the shop, July 31, 1930, showed eight workers getting between one and two dollars a week; none getting between two and three dollars; ten between three and four; seven between four and five dollars, and thirteen between five and six dollars a week. Only forty per cent of all the workers received over eight dollars a week, the legal minimum decree for beginners in the industry.

## **Charity to the Rescue!**

During the first two weeks of August 1930, the wages of the Lincoln Shirt Company of New Bedford were so near the starvation level that the good City Welfare Organization had

to come to the rescue of many of the families of workers and give relief (not dole!) There has been no evidence to prove that the wages have increased since last August. The week ending August 9th I received the unbelievably low wage of \$3.52 for a full time week of forty-eight hours. If I had been in the shop for six months or so and had worked up a good speed I might have made \$8 or \$9. Not only were wages low in the Lincoln Shirt Company but practically every Massachusetts labor law was violated. Girls under 16 years of age worked over eight hours a day. The company provided a common drinking cup; the toilets were filthy and did not comply with sanitary regulations; the forty-eight hour week was often violated, and as has been said the minimum wage law which decrees for the shirt industry, \$8 a week for beginners and \$13.75 for experienced workers, has been totally disregarded.

Second, the new-industry wolf has broken down union conditions which prevailed in the days when the Massachusetts textile mills were flourishing. And though organized labor has tried to fight the wolf it has had to play the role of the sheep in most instances because of the great over-supply of labor. Third, the new-industry wolf has refused to adhere to labor legislation and seems to think that the good state of Massachusetts, which brags about its labor legislation, is offering a frontier where rules and regulations may be discarded.

Just what has been accomplished by labor in fighting the wolf? In New Bedford the workers of the Lincoln Shirt Company planned a strike for better wages. This was in March, 1930. The leaders of the conspiracy were fired and the rest of the girls were threatened by the police that they would be arrested if further attempts were made at striking. The police had to protect property interests! In a situation where a choice is given between starvation by no food at all or slow starvation by under nourishment, the latter is usually chosen. So the workers remain at the Lincoln Shirt Company and when a few of us tried

to start another attack at the low wages, in August, 1930, the workers for the most part felt compelled to accept the process of slow starvation, knowing from the 1928 textile strike in New Bedford that very little sympathy could be aroused if they refused to work during the period when work was scarce and public opinion was encouraging other Lincoln Shirt Companies to New Bedford to bring prosperity.

### Labor Laws Violated

Continually since last February when the bulk of the new industries came into Lawrence, the Lawrence Central Labor Union made complaints to the State Department of Labor in regard to violations of the 48-hour law and violation of the minimum wage law. Due to the efforts of this organization one violation of the 48-hour law was prosecuted and violation of the law ceased in one plant, the Pilot Radio Tube Corporation. Also due to persistent complaints wages in this factory were raised from \$7.20 to \$10.08. The Lawrence Central Labor Union has taken the following stand on the new-industry problem: "Labor wants work and prosperity that comes with increased industrial activity; it welcomes those industries that assume the responsibilities and standards of honest business; but it stands unalterably opposed to wage cutting concerns that migrate to the source of low rentals, low taxes, low power rates and then with all of those advantages, demand cheap labor. Labor standards which have been established after years of struggle and effort are at stake, as are old established companies when subjected to guerrilla competition of concerns producing at cut-rate costs."

What has been the role of the Minimum Wage Commission and the Department of Labor in all this activity? Of course the Minimum Wage Law is not mandatory. The law does require, however, that the Commission publish in the newspapers the names of concerns not complying with the law. When the Commission has done this it has been in obscure papers and as, in one case, with the factory's name changed. The Pilot Radio Tube Corporation appeared as the Lawrence Factories, Inc. "Three members of the Commission have made individual statements that they personally have never gone on record as favoring or



### IN MASSACHUSETTS AND ELSEWHERE!

A John Baer cartoon in "Labor" which delineates present conditions—in the Bay State and through the country. Several spasmodic strikes have resulted in New England.

opposing the Minimum Wage Law, which definitely indicates a lack of belief in and respect for the Minimum Wage Law, by members of the Commission appointed to enforce this very law." This fact is taken from the resolution passed unanimously by the Massachusetts Federation of Labor in convention, August 7, 1930, asking the General Court of the state to investigate the operations of the Minimum Wage Law and to appoint an impartial committee in making a complete and constructive investigation of the Commission and its activities.

The only other organizations which have taken the side of labor in trying to force the new industries to comply with the law are the Women's Trade

Union League and the Consumers' League. Both of these organizations have made continued protests to the Minimum Wage Commission but not even a preliminary inspection of the new industries was made until several months after the complaints were first sent in.

As I write the above I receive word from Lawrence that another new factory, the Sterling Underwear Company, has begun operating. It employs about fifty girls and pays wages, ranging from \$5 to \$15. The movement has begun. As Massachusetts textile mills move South, sweat shops of New York move to the vacated textile mills—both movements being characterized by peon wages.



# Where Do American Workers Stand Today?

By A. J. Muste

THIS article is an attempt to summarize my impressions as to the condition and prospects of the labor movement, the outlook for C. P. L. A., the state of mind of the American workers, at the conclusion of a seven-weeks trip from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast, with stops at Detroit, Grand Rapids, Chicago, Milwaukee, the Twin Cities, Seattle, Tacoma, Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Denver.

I. *How was the C. P. L. A. Message Received and to What Extent Has Organization of C. P. L. A. Been Advanced?* Wherever a hearing was obtained, the C. P. L. A. program was greeted with satisfaction. It seemed to me that questioning on the part both of conservatives and of left wingers was more genuine and less hostile than would have been the case a couple of years ago. There are all kinds of places where a hearing can be gotten for our message, and I am convinced that we must try to do a lot of touring about the country, such as Mufson and Bellaver, e. g., are doing at present, in order to put ourselves on a national basis.

Because C. P. L. A. as an organization was practically brand new west of Chicago and with a program of four or five day stops in a place one had to leave just about the time he had gotten the lay of the land, it was not possible to do as much by way of enrolling individual members or establishing C. P. L. A. locals as I had hoped. Nevertheless, some members have been added. The Chicago local has been permanently organized as is pointed out elsewhere in this issue. Detroit has asked for the formation of a local. By follow-up work, partly by mail and partly by personal contact, more can now be done along these lines. An important beginning has been made.

II. *What of the Unemployment Insurance Campaign?* At this point important results have been achieved, and C. P. L. A. can congratulate itself on its accomplishments. The interest in the subject on the part of workers is very general, and is growing steadily. In every state where I stopped unemployment insurance bills

are in the legislature. In a number of instances, though the A. F. of L. has not yet gotten round to supporting the measure, state federations are openly backing it. Even where this is not the case, many local unions are doing so. In Illinois and Washington the initiative has come almost entirely from C. P. L. A. groups. In Minnesota the labor people took our bills as their start.

In a considerable number of instances, I found that bills along the American Association for Labor Legislation's line had been introduced, with the dangerous provisions of contributions by workers, permission to employers to set up their own (company union) schemes, etc. I was able to call the attention of many active laborites to these defects, and this may have valuable results when the time comes that bills really have a chance of passage.

It seems doubtful now whether any state will this year actually set up an unemployment insurance scheme. This is a serious matter, and means that we must push our campaign on this issue with greater vigor than ever. There is real danger that otherwise the whole matter will be forgotten when economic conditions improve somewhat.

In this connection, it must be pointed out that outside of Communist activities little is being done in the way of dramatic demonstrations on the unemployment situation. The three notable exceptions perhaps are Minneapolis where the official labor movement is at least staging impressive mass meetings, and Philadelphia and Los Angeles, where the Socialist party has brought the issue to the attention of the public and the workers, in the former case largely under C. P. L. A. inspiration, in Los Angeles under the vigorous leadership of young Bill Busick, S. P. organizer.

Busick, when I was in Los Angeles a month ago, had upwards of 2,000 unemployed signed up, divided up according to city wards and precincts, sending delegates to an Unemployed Council, etc. A permit to parade was refused and the Council decided not to defy the police until they had a

more solid organization built. At a mass meeting of 2,000 which took the place of the parade, I could see no indication that the postponement of the parade had cooled the ardor of the crowd. There must be much more dramatic forcing of the issue on the attention of the authorities and the public. Why has it not been done? Are the workers just utterly apathetic, satisfied or scared? Or has our leadership of them lacked vigor and imagination? We shall not know until we exercise a little more vigor and imagination!

III. *What is the Outlook for Labor or Any Kind of Independent Political Action?* This question must be dealt with from various angles. Is there a good chance, e. g., that some kind of third party, predominantly supported by farmers and workers, may get under way soon? If the economic depression does not seem to be definitely on the wane in another few months, then in view of the fact that a presidential election is in the offing, it seems very likely that some kind of third party effort will be launched. If the Republican insurgents should definitely split from the G. O. P. that of course would automatically put a third group in the field which might be pretty moderate in program and tone; but would have to look to workers and farmers for its votes.

Granting that sentiment may change rapidly if serious depression hangs on, I do not now see any convincing signs that there would be large support for such a third party, or for a more definitely labor-farmer party. In some of the farm states, there is great dissatisfaction, but it is likely to vanish if farm prices advance a little. In Michigan, there is not at the moment any definite third party tendency. The automobile workers if they do move, are, I think, quite as likely to go Communist or "Independent Labor Party" (of which more in a moment) as they are to go Socialist or Labor Party. In Chicago some conferences about reviving a labor party in Cook County have been held, but the movement does not yet show much drive. Big Bill Thompson and Al Capone can sit pretty for a while longer.

In Wisconsin I judge that the Socialists will go along with any third party move, which is not left wing.

But in Wisconsin the LaFollettes will decide whether there is to be a third party, and they give no sign of saying yes! In Minnesota the Farmer-Labor party people would, I think, very much like to see a number of groups combine to issue a call for a conference to consider a national Farmer-Labor party. They naturally recognize that there are distinct limits to what they can achieve so long as their movement is confined to a single state. In Montana there would be some support for such move, but industrial conditions in the state are pretty bad. In Washington a Farmer-Labor party move might get some support—more from the country than from the city just now, most observers seem to think. In California a third party move would not have a ghost of a chance, it is generally held. Socialists and Communists have all the "dissenters" there are, which is not many, and any new party would simply mean the same crowd under another name.

What, then, of the existing working-class parties, Socialist and Communist? In a few centers around the country there is a fairly active Socialist movement—Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Milwaukee, Los Angeles. In many other pretty important centers in all sections of the country there is practically nothing. There is some increase in activity as compared with a couple of years ago. In quite a few instances militants who have been out of the party are going back. There are some other accessions. It does not seem to me that there is as yet any evidence of any mass movement into the S. P.

The Communist movement has active groups in a large number of places. It is certainly doing a good deal to keep the unemployment situation to the fore. It has the support of a fairly large number of young militant workers and it is my impression that its influence on college youth is on the increase. This, by the way, is to a considerable extent, I think, the result of increased interest in Russia and hopefulness about the Russian experiment. If one impression stands out above any other from this trip, it is

## STILL UNTOUCHED BY REVOLT



Our great legion of unorganized workers, throughout our far-flung country, have yet to learn the A-B-C's of worker-consciousness

the amazing interest in Russia on the part of practically all classes in all parts of the country! All the same, the C. P. has no considerable influence in any unions today, though there are places where it makes organization difficult for anybody else as among the Los Angeles clothing workers, and I found no evidence of any large-scale spontaneous mass movement of workers in response to C. P. leadership.

One more point should be noted under this head. There are certain elements around the country who are not enthusiastic about a broad Labor Party at this stage, either because they think there is no chance of such a development or because they fear it would be a milk-and-water affair, who cannot stomach Communist tactics, and who do not believe that the Socialist Party is going to adopt and execute a thorough-going, militant policy, and who therefore wonder whether there is not a place for an "Independent Labor Party" which would have the "Socialism-in-our-time" program of the S. P. militants, would have a vigorous policy toward the unions, would seek for a working-

class constituency, but would aim at large-scale political education of the workers, rather than election results. All this may merely represent a wish, but I think it needs to be pointed out in any attempt to picture the present American scene.

In conclusion, the workers are certainly becoming more thoughtful. The chances are conditions may force them to action—witness the recent textile outbreaks. On the whole, however, the evidences that things are ready to crystallize into action either on the economic or on the political field, are not numerous. The process seems likely to be a slow one, because the workers still think "prosperity" will return, because they have not in this generation had any genuine labor education, because every move to organize which they do make is met by vicious, murderous opposition, because to make any dent in the American scene seems to require so much money and energy that it seems futile to make a small beginning anywhere, because the official labor movement acts as a brake on militancy rather than a spur.

(Continued on page 29)

# Flashes From The Labor World

True to American tradition of looking to government when in trouble the millions of hungry unemployed and farmers have been watching Washington for some ray of hope.

And the Great Engineer who built his reputation as the man who fed Belgium has built another as the man who starves America. In some way not yet quite clear to the man in the street, there is a great difference between taking the money of the United States government to feed any one of a dozen peoples of the old world when they are starving and taking the money of their own government to feed the people of America. The difference, of course, being that it is a disgrace to use one's own funds to feed oneself but no disgrace to accept another people's funds. It all seems quite clear to Hoover and anyone who disagrees is an enemy of the country.

For a time a tiny revolt surged in the Senate. Senators Robinson and Caraway, driven by the hunger in their state which might threaten their jobs, stormed over the situation, forced through a \$25,000,000 appropriation for food, were for a day the leaders of the people. Their folks in Arkansas had sold their last possession to buy food, they said. All the property of a once prosperous people had been destroyed. Now they must have help. Then came to Washington one Harvey C. Couch, of the Arkansas power trust. Hoover was doing his bit for the power boys; they paid an installment on the debt. Mr. Couch saw the Senators, the Senators accepted a so-called compromise by which the government made available another \$20,000,000 for loans on good security. Either these Arkansans had miraculously obtained property to use as security in the meantime or Robinson and Caraway had taken power trust orders and deserted their starving people.

It is purely a minor matter that Senator Robinson's firm represents one of Couch's companies.

\* \* \*

Bitter disillusionment followed the many predictions by government officials of better times just around the corner, so that a new ballyhoo technique became necessary. At the first of the year, the capitalist press did a neat job in this new ballyhoo. There was no prediction of prosperity to come, but definite news stories of the hiring of hundreds of thousands of men. The depression had been temporary as the big

boys said it would be, and now it was all over—or practically all over, they said. And if, forsooth, you were still out of a job that was because they had not quite got to you yet in the upsurge of prosperity which was surely due to attain greater heights than ever before.

It was quite effective since it named cities and gave figures, sometimes naming plants where the hiring was going on. The labor press, in part, showed up some of the figures as being mere resumption of work stopped over a brief inventory period and others as being pretty close to pure bunk. But largely the impression stood as the bosses' press wanted it to stand.

Then during February the reports on employment came in from the states which gather statistics. Without exception they showed that while December had seen a record low in employment, January went still lower. January saw the largest number of business failures of any month in our history. The new ballyhoo had failed.

\* \* \*

"I believe the United States before the crash in October, 1929, was coming nearer to achieving the joint ideals of capital and labor than any other community has done at any time and was coming nearer to bridging the gap between production and consumption." This credo might have come from Foster, Catchings, Carver, or any of several hundred bankers and business men, but these leaders of American thought are today strangely quiet. It is a quotation from that famous British diehard and mountebank Winston Churchill, advocate of the "treat-'em-rough" policy toward India, who amuses the House of Commons with his antics.

How this gap was being bridged during the period mentioned is indicated by figures recently released by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. These show that from 1913 to 1929 real wages increased 36.4 per cent. From 1913 to 1927 they increased 33.8 per cent, and during the same period, according to the Department of Commerce, dividend and interest payments increased 167 per cent.

\* \* \*

Philadelphia has recently been the storm center of the labor world. Even before the murder of Alberta Bachman at Stroudsburg, Mayor Mackey and Director of Public Safety Schofield had succeeded in bringing the attention of the workers to their city.

In the first place, the City of Brother-

ly Love had only succeeded in raising some \$1,500,000 after weeks of effort on a \$5,000,000 budget for jobless relief. There was tremendous need, but there was also great willingness to suffer and the Brotherly Love millionaire saw no reason why the jobless shouldn't go on suffering in becoming silence.

Then Philadelphia Socialists held a demonstration which was broken up by police but got front page publicity and at the same time Mayor Mackey made a speech over the radio in which he pictured the revolution sitting on Philly's doorstep, warned of the imminent need of the militia to protect private property and laid it all on the stingy millionaires who had refused to kick in. That did the job. Within a week more than a million dollars was given. Included were six gifts of \$100,000 each. Think of being scared \$100,000 worth!

Two days after Mackey's speech the hosiery workers called a strike in the non-union mills of the Philadelphia district. The first day some 2,000 responded, driven to revolt by unbearable conditions and repeated wage cuts. Two days later Director of Safety Schofield called union leaders to his office, expressed the opinion that the strike was crazy and criminal and handed out the edict that he (Mr. Schofield in person) was going to break that strike! "You are not only fighting the owners but the entire police department," he shouted. It wasn't fair not to, but no one tipped him off that labor always fights the bosses plus the police. The difference is that most executives are not so dumb as to spill the story as Schofield did.

Hundreds were arrested, mostly girl strikers taken from picket lines. They went to jail laughing and singing. Then Magistrate Costello looked over the situation, decided that Schofield's acts were the ones really crazy and criminal, and released 392 prisoners in one fell swoop.

Meanwhile several small shops had signed up with the union and the strike went on. Schofield's ambitions to be mayor were believed punctured.

\* \* \*

For years we have been saying that there was so much prosperity the workers would not listen to arguments for a better social order. Now that prosperity has crashed, millions are in actual want, there is small promise of betterment—yet progressive labor forces make discouragingly little headway.

A story appearing in a New York paper recently seems to picture the atti-

tude: Three brothers, out of jobs, had refused all offers of help; two had starved to death; the other was sitting patiently waiting to die. One can understand the German sailor out in San Francisco who was hungry and cold, so when the police turned him away because they had no bed for him he heaved a rock through a plate glass window. The cops found him a bed. If some of the several jobless men who have lately killed or tried to kill their families and themselves had taken those guns and gone out to get the food which lies in such plenty around them, that might be condemned by our legalists but it could at least be understood. The difficulty is understanding the man who can sit and watch his family starve in the midst of plenty and finally turn his gun on himself.

\* \* \*

There is one job being done that is so decidedly hitting the spot that it stands as a shining exception to other failures to "click" with the unemployed. That is the plan of publishing "The Unemployed" magazine, put out by the League for Industrial Democracy and sold by tired apple vendors.

The L.I.D. was able to hit prominent authors and cartoonists just as they wanted an opportunity to express themselves on the economic situation. (It must be marvelous to be an artist in something besides swearing at a time like this!) And they responded so that publishers with a ripe bank account must envy the talent advertised on the front page of "The Unemployed."

Then the L.I.D. fitted their selling methods right in with the trend of apple selling. It takes hard-boiled Pittsburgh or Tammany police to allow one person to sell apples and jail another for selling The Unemployed. The result was that sales on the first issue went to 75,000 and on the next have climbed close to the 150,000 mark!

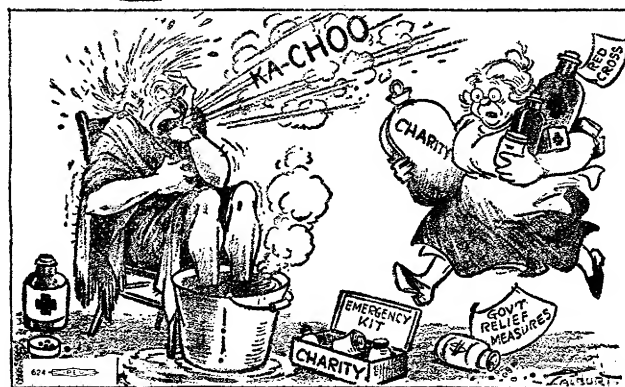
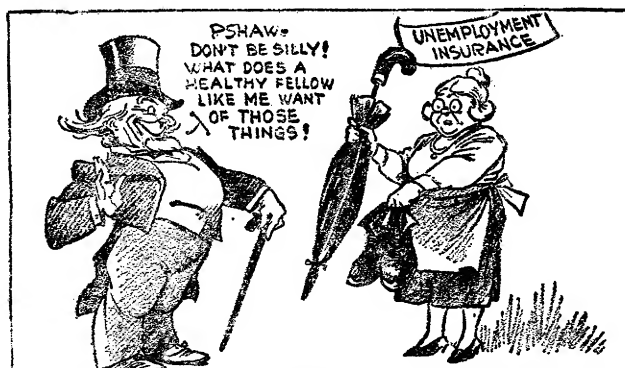
Encouraged by one sweeping success, the L.I.D. has started a new stunt—putting window cards in the homes of the jobless to be shown as service flags were during the war, with the words across the top, "Drafted in the Army of the Unemployed" and a spot left blank for a star for each jobless person in the household.

One international union editor ordered 500, other bundle orders have come in, and L.I.D. groups in a half dozen cities

are starting distribution. It can easily be imagined what a tremendous impression would be made in the average industrial city or district if the cards were used thoroughly. Such a sense of mass suffering and of mass power might well be engendered as would give new punch to every effort to organize the jobless.

\* \* \*

What would you do if you had spent 14 years in prison as a class war victim, if every witness against you had been shown a perjurer or worse, if judge



New York World-Telegram

#### FRUITS OF NEGLECT

and jury asked your release saying they believed you innocent, if a last great effort was made on the occasion of the location of the one "lost" witness—and you were then re-condemned?

Tom Mooney, facing that situation, has cut loose with a 50-page booklet entitled "Labor Leaders Betray Tom Mooney" in which he not only scathingly arraigned California labor leaders, including State Federation Sec. Scharrenberg, but went on to include William Green and Matthew Woll.

The booklet was ignored for two weeks. But thousands began to show up across the country in union halls, labor meetings, liberals' mail boxes. Letters and resolutions started pouring into Washington. It got so hot that Pres. William Green of the A. F. of L. released an interview in which he expressed regret that Mooney had been so unkind, re-affirmed the A. F. of L. de-

mand that Mooney be released, remembered the vast amounts of money spent by local unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. for Mooney defense and expressed regret that Mooney had failed to accept a parole.

Hints from the west are that the printing presses have just started on the booklet. The whole labor movement will watch the new Mooney campaign—Billings is not a partner in it—for new fireworks and with a great curiosity as to whether two-listed methods bring better results than cooperation with the labor machine.

\* \* \*

Labor is engaged in its biennial effort to get a slight amendment to existing laws in its favor while it blocks large amendments against its interests.

The enthusiastic faith expressed in some professional quarters a few weeks ago that several unemployment insurance bills would be passed seems to have died away.

Wisconsin, where the State Federation is strongly backing the proposal, shows a real chance that such a bill will pass. The merits of the bill by the time it has met with the compromises necessary to get it through are another matter. The industrial states of the northeast, where unemployment is most serious and where some hope was held out, have found an alibi in the conference called by Governor Roosevelt which decided to study the problem. Green and the A. F. of L. Executive Council is studying the Problem. For that matter, so is

Herbert Hoover—and with this definite advantage that he has been studying it since 1921 so he's used to the study.

Conditions are ideal for 8-hour day laws, for raising the child labor standards, for shortening hours of labor for women, and especially for a general attack on convict or forced labor, because of the ballyhoo on Russia's so-called forced labor.

But with the general lethargy permeating the labor movement and no able and aggressive organization to lead the fight for such laws, valuable days speed by with little accomplished.

\* \* \*

And so America slips a bit lower in the economic scale. Most of the rest of the world slips with her. While the Soviet Union slowly, painfully, surely climbs.

FRANK L. PALMER.

# The March of the Machine

## Five-Day Week Again Suggested

By JUSTUS EBERT

**A** GAIN is the voice of untrammelled invention and science heard throughout the land. Where economies are concerned, the inventors and scientists, like the Bourbons, neither learn nor forget. Because there was a time when their efforts had a virgin field and could therefore apparently expand indefinitely, they fail to realize that under industry for private profit, invention and science have reached a saturation point, and can, consequently, no longer develop as beneficially as formerly. Hence they repeat old formulas despite the changed conditions that make them no longer applicable.

Here's Dr. H. H. Sheldon of New York University, coordinator of a symposium under the auspices of the American Institute. He says:

"Civilization cannot go into reverse and retreat from the machine age." It would be utterly uneconomical to scrap a steam shovel and put 1,000 men with teaspoons to accomplish its work. This might temporarily check unemployment, but if the plan were adhered to it would permanently stop all engineering work and we would shortly find our civilization stagnating in a depression that would surpass anything in recorded history.

"The alternative is to set the unemployed to work producing new products that have been made available through the research work in History furnishes abundant proof that such procedure is the correct solution of the present industrial problem."

Surely, these arguments are to be commended. Truly, "civilization cannot go into reverse and retreat from the machine age." It must go on to the social ownership and control of the machine. Otherwise the cumulative results of its bad effects will be both destructive and depressing.

They are already so. For if Dr. Sheldon's logic were logic we would witness, not industrial depression, but its very opposite; unqualified prosperity for all. Here we have a continuous stream of new products, with results that are far from stimulative or inspiring, where good economic conditions and demand for labor are concerned. In fact, each new product, under the present private profit system, makes old conditions more acute.

Look at fuel. See what scientific

substitutes have done to coal and themselves. Note how rayon depresses silk and cotton, as well as itself. And those new developments, pipe lines and buses, look at the Cain they are raising for railroad Abel, while getting nowhere out of the depression themselves. On all sides, new products crowd old, creating overproduction by means of excess capacity and lack of consumption, the latter via displacement of labor largely.

No, we wouldn't be so cocksure about Dr. Sheldon's new products as industrial problem solvers. It's not in them, under private capitalism.

That new scientific discoveries do not ameliorate old economic conditions, but intensify them instead, is again illustrated by a Montreal dispatch regarding the use of a perfected electrical steel-making furnace in Canada. According to the dispatch:

"Perfection of an electrical steel-making process which is expected to reduce greatly Canada's dependence on other countries for steel has been reported by James L. Waldiew, president and managing director of the Canadian Tube and Steel Products, Ltd. "He said that the process would enable his company to discontinue the purchase of steel billets and steel wire rods, most of which had been imported from the United States and Europe."

New scientific discoveries may be more harmful than beneficial to employees. Says Miss Mary Anderson, director United States Women's Bureau, in a public statement:

"Hazards to working women are increasing everywhere at an alarming rate.

"Each year brings changes in industrial practices that involve the use of materials that may prove dangerous to women—for example, the development of the use of radium in paint and the new substances that are appearing constantly in pastes, dyes and other compounds."

The workers in Cuba do not regard

new machines very highly. According to a Havana dispatch:

"Thousands of sugar cane workers are supporting a bill introduced in the Cuban Congress that would impose a customs tax of \$100,000 on every cane-cutting machine brought to Cuba.

"Each machine will replace 200 workers. Sugar cane cutting is listed as one of the most laborious tasks. The displacement of hand cutters, these workers declare, will intensify the poverty that prevails in Cuba."

Here's a United States Senator whose views are not in accord with those of Dr. Sheldon:

"The substitution of machinery for hand labor is revolutionizing working conditions and throwing millions out of employment," declared United States Senator Joe T. Robinson, in suggesting the five-day week.

"Unemployment seems to be increasing rather than diminishing," he said. "Many circumstances indicate that mere temporary measures would be insufficient, although, of course, they must first be considered. To restore the equilibrium between the labor supply and the demand for laborers, the industries of the United States may find it necessary to resort to the five-day week."

In our last month's "March of the Machine" we praised machine age rhetoric. In this installment let us give an example of its humor, from the Locomotive Engineers' Journal:

The following letter was sent to a railroad by a woman who lives near a railroad yard:

"Gentlemen: Why is it that your switch engine has to ding and dong and fizz and spit and clang and bang and buzz and hiss and bell and wail and pant and rant and howl and yowl and grate and grind and puff and bump and click and clang and chug and moan and hoot and toot and crash and grunt and gasp and groan and whistle and wheeze and squeak and blow and jar and jerk and rasp and jingle and twang and clack and rumble and jangle and ring and clatter and yelp and howl and hum and snort and puff and growl and thump and boom and clash and jolt and jostle and shake and screech and snarl and slam and throb and crink and quiver and rumble and roar and rattle and yell and smoke and smell and shriek like hell all night long?"



# Speed-Up Mass Revolts!

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

IT is evident that the American working class is entering upon a new fighting stage. Voices prophesying class warfare are increasing in volume. Strikes—such as those alluded to in the editorial in this issue, “Mass Strikes, 1917-18 and Now”—are becoming common phenomena. “The Higher Strategy” of the American Federation of Labor has proved to be no strategy at all. Union-management cooperation, Labor banking, Matthew Wollism, servility to the National Civic Federation have ended in platitudes and defeat. Force instead of fawning is now on the calendar of American labor.

Five years ago the state of affairs was just reversed. “Prosperity” had become something eternal, like the religionist’s conception of “Heaven.” Bertram Austin, with his *Croix de Guerre*, and W. Francis Lloyd had come from England to observe our “unprecedented prosperity.” They had returned to their native shores, to write with the approval of the editor of *The Economist*, that “the industrial prosperity of America is undoubtedly based on a solid foundation,” and that “this period of (American) national well-being is not of a temporary character. From Harvard, Thomas Nixon Carver sang out that “this prosperity is coming to us precisely because our ideals are not materialistic.” “All these things,” he averred, “are being added unto us precisely because we are seeking the Kingdom of God and his righteousness.” He beheld an “Economic Revolution in the United States,” which consisted in labor banking and stock buying. The old violent methods of Labor were dead. Class conflict was buried forever.

The American Federation of Labor was unable to assume a critical attitude toward this triumph of Prosperity, with its defeatism for the workers and its company unionism. The McNamara case had made the A. F. of L. shun militancy. In the war period it had won back “respectability” by

double-crossing thousands of workers. Its “constructive policy” — so praised by Carver—caused it to combat company unionism by company-unionizing itself. It was left to the radicals, with their then comparatively weak voices, to challenge the reality of Prosperity or its permanency. The pages of *LABOR AGE* were crowded with sarcastic shafts at “the hocus-pocus Prosperity” and with futile cries for action; the *AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST* basked in the sunshine of donothingism.

## “Higher Strategists” Fail

“Caught up in this net of “business psychology” and “constructive statesmanship,” the Higher Strategists of the A. F. of L. are unequal to the task which the present fighting period places upon Labor. Laving their limbs in the warm waters of Miami, while millions starve, the Executive Council could scarcely be distinguished from a Chamber of Commerce or the National Manufacturers Association. With the Julius Barneses and the John Edgertons it rebuffed the idea of unemployment insurance or of real unemployment relief. With them, it denounced the idea of an extra session of Congress, at which the anti-injunction bill had the best chance of passage that it has ever had. The demand for beer was its highest level.

Out of such leadership, it is clear, mass revolt cannot come. And it is precisely mass revolt which is demanded by current conditions. The workers are filled with fear and uncertainty, they are also desperately sullen at the low wages which are now their lot. Audacity and certainty can be given them, and the desperate discontent fanned into a flame. Unless they win the courage to act vehemently on the industrial field, they will not rally around any political action in the name of Labor.

With one or two notable exceptions, the A. F. of L. unions have allowed the Communists to do the bulk of the industrial agitation. With one or two

exceptions again, it has been to the Communists that the conduct of mass strikes has been left. The “Reds” have led the vanguard of revolt.

Aside from their “foreign” complications, the Communists bring serious handicaps to this job. Their queer conception of “ethics” repel many workers. It is that sort of conception which dubs Scott Nearing as “Social Fascist” and Roger Baldwin “an agent of British Imperialism.” The Communists have printed both such attacks upon these men. It is not my personal friendship for Baldwin nor my admiration for Nearing that would cause me to refuse to utter such libels, under orders from Moscow or anyone else. It is simply that they are asinine falsehoods. Workers view the same tactics in the same light; there are more ex-Communists in America today than members or followers of the official Communist Party.

The breach is thus left open for Progressives. More than any other feature of our program, the drive toward industrial action is imperative. Recent events have given the lie to the statement that revolt cannot be stirred up in times of depression. It has occurred before—in the great railway strikes of 1877, for instance. It will occur today, provided Progressives take upon themselves this admittedly difficult and challenging undertaking. Unless we do that, we cannot criticize the A. F. of L. for its lethargy. Unless we do it, we cannot continue to hold aloof from the Communists. We must act or be silent.

We can afford to look the facts in the face. We go into this effort under a considerable handicap, which neither the A. F. of L. nor the Communists suffer from. That is the lack of financial resources. Aside from the strike itself, there are the expenses of organization work to consider. Strikes have been carried on before without initial money, none the less. And much of the organization work must be done, as it has always been done, by volunteer organizers.

## Wanted: 100 Young Fighters

It is this realization that impels us to continue the appeal for young workers to stay in industry and young intellectuals to go into industry, for agitational purposes. One hundred young men and women, dedicated to a five years' program of organized activity, could accomplish wonders. They should work under central direction. They should be able to rely on a central reserve fund which could tide them over periods of "blacklisting," part-time work and other hazards which might interfere with their continued organization work.

We need them in Steel, Coal, Textiles—in every basic industry, to join the few already there. Calls come to us from many industries and from every section of the country, asking for organization aid or suggesting the drastic need for such activity. The personnel is lacking to meet these calls. The personnel would not be lacking if such a centralized drive were gotten under way.

There must be a degree of hardness in the souls of those who go in for this crusade. Class warfare is no pillow contest. Intelligent cunning and boundless enthusiasm for the victory of the workers must characterize these soldiers in the darkness of America. They must be ready to go far, under a well-thought out plan of action. It is one thing to sit in a study or behind a desk and plot out the winning of America for the workers. It is quite another matter to go out and work among these workers, and battle with the employers for them and with them. It is no wonder that so many radicals seek "escapes" from such harshness, and degenerate into windjammers, mouthing platitudes as meaningless as those of the A. F. of L. officialdom.

But there must be in the United States 100 young folks who have these qualities. We are on the look-out for them. We ask them to band themselves together, under the Progressive banner and the cooperation of Progressive leadership, and give a real defiance to our dominant Capitalism. Capitalism is not afraid of words, it is deeds that count. The workers are tired of words, they look for deeds. Everything else is wind and smoke.

## Have We the "Guts"?

While this centralized, organized effort is afoot, Progressives can scarcely remain paralyzed. The speeding-up of mass revolt remains a necessity. We must make contacts rapidly in

as many industries as possible. We must concentrate on one big attempt, at least; and go from that to others.

The question we must answer is: Have we the courage? Or, to put it in the vernacular: Have we the "guts"? If we have not, all talk about a Labor Party is the veriest hokum. All aspirations about the "Workers Revolution" are mere Barnumesque. Workers who fear to join together in industrial "conspiracies" or who fail to see the need for it, will never rally to

tive statesmanship." To impress upon them their class-status requires mass movements, mass demonstrations, mass strikes. Vaguely they desire changes, many of them. They are entangled in old party philosophy and old party commitments. They can only be shaken out of that world of fiction into which they have been led from childhood, by flaming messages of things as they are.

Flaming messages will not come from that citadel of stolidity, the of-

## "WHERE ARE OUR JOBS?"



(Appearing in a leaflet of the American Association for Labor Legislation)

independent political action on any telling scale. It is out of industrial action that they come to know that they are workers—a distinct class—and work out that knowledge at a white heat.

Today this is particularly the case. Since the war, an entire new generation of working people has come into industry. They are the victims of "Prosperity," "individual initiative," the regimentation of thought accomplished by the public schools, and A. F. of L. "respectability" and "construc-

tive statesmanship." Flaming messages will come from the Communists, but with obvious limitations that may turn the flame to smoke. Upon the shoulders of Progressives lies the task of doing this gigantic piece of work. The extent of their response, in one way or another, is the measure of their sincerity. All cannot be in the field, but all can cooperate with those in the field. In that way, and in that way only, can the challenge of bankrupt Capitalism be met in the United States.

# C.P.L.A. "Goes to the Country"

**W**ESTWARD the C. P. L. A. message wends its way. Two weeks prior to the return of Chairman A. J. Muste from his country-wide tour, Executive Secretary Israel Mufson and Cal Bellaver of the United Mine Workers (Howat group) set forth on their coast-to-coast tour. Unemployment insurance and adequate immediate unemployment relief are being stressed by them.

Washington was Stop No. 1. In that city Ben Marsh of the People's Lobby greeted the "C. P. L. A. on wheels." Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York, author of the various Federal unemployment bills, gave them a warm welcome. A number of labor leaders and friends of unemployment insurance were interviewed in the National Capitol, before the trek through the country began.

On Saturday morning, February 7th, Mufson and Bellaver arrived in Baltimore, where they remained until the 9th. Miss Elizabeth Gilman gave them great assistance. On the evening of the 7th, they spoke before a meeting of laborites and progressives interested in unemployment insurance. This meeting voted to have the executive committee on unemployment insurance meet with Frank Hirt, State legislator whom Mufson had interviewed, with the idea of getting Hirt to amend his bill for unemployment insurance, introduced in the Maryland legislature. The bill was thus made more progressive in its features. Among those who cooperated were John P. Troxell, formerly manager of the Haverhill Shoe Workers Protective Union, and Rabbi Edward Israel. Two meetings on unemployment insurance in the afternoon and evening of the 9th completed the Baltimore visit.

Encouraged by the work accomplished in the Maryland metropolis, the "unemployment tourists" pushed on to Philadelphia and thence across country to Utica, N. Y. C. P. L. A.-ers were interviewed in the Quaker City on future plans and activities, including the demonstration to be made by the Socialists at the City Hall. Josephine Kaczor, with her usual interest, got together the Philadelphia

## *"Coast to Coast Tourists" Reach Ohio As March Opens*

Brookwooders for Mufson, to discuss the anniversary dinner of March 6. At Utica, the "tourists" were discussion leaders at the Y. W. C. A. Mid-Winter Conference, on workers education and unemployment insurance.

### **Buffalo Mass Meeting**

Buffalo was the busiest place of the two first weeks of the trip. Meetings on February 19th and 20th on unemployment insurance preceded a large mass meeting on the night of the 24th, under the auspices of the local C. P. L. A. branch. Speakers were Mufson, Rev. Herman Hahn and Frank C. Perkins, President of the City Council. The meeting passed resolutions calling on the city government for more adequate relief and sent a telegram to Governor Roosevelt demanding the speeding up of unemployment insurance legislation. People were much aroused in Buffalo at the C. P. L. A. campaign, and splendid publicity was secured for the "tourists," especially in the Scripps-Howard *Buffalo Times*. It is agreed that there is a great opportunity for C. P. L. A. work in that city.

Niagara Falls, with two meetings, Erie, Pa., and Pittsburgh were the next stopping places on the trip, and March will see the crusaders in Ohio and Indiana. It is out of such fine sacrifices as Mufson and Bellaver are making, crusading in the old way that built up every worth-while labor organization, that the C. P. L. A. will reach out farther and farther into the America "beyond the Hudson." They are going forward on their own resources, carrying the banner of unemployment insurance and the other items of the C. P. L. A. program into those places where it must be taken. The Odyssey of the "C. P. L. A. on wheels" will carry these crusaders to the Pa-

cific, and thence by the Southern route back to New York. It is a year's penetration of the U. S. A.

While this tour proceeds, the local branches are evidencing increased activity. Chicago has gotten a good start, and is extending its organization. In Detroit a branch has been born, since Muste's visit. John Taylor, a local trade unionist, has taken the lead in its formation. In Philadelphia, the C. P. L. A.-ers continued their active work. The Socialist unemployment demonstration was planned by them, and they have been of aid to the textile unions in the strikes in the Kensington district.

### **Strike Activities**

Louis F. Budenz has also aided in the New York work of the Philadelphia strikes, and has been cooperating by invitation in the first two weeks of the Neckwear Workers' fine walk-out in New Haven, Conn. A hang-over of his work for the Hosiery Workers in the Nazareth strike took place in the indictment of President Arthur Schmidt of the Kraemer Company for subornation of perjury and Calvin Hartzell, General Foreman, for perjury, by the February Grand Jury of Northampton County. The indictments arose out of the affidavits made to secure the sweeping injunction there, and which affidavits Hartzell admitted on the witness stand were false. The importance of the indictments lies in the fact that they establish beyond doubt the utter paucity of facts on which injunctions are obtained.

A fine and enthusiastic meeting of the Chicago chapter of the C. P. L. A. on Tuesday evening, February 19, was the last event on Chairman Muste's trip across the Continent. When our Chairman was in Chicago a month

earlier the Chicago C. P. L. A.-ers secured his promise to stop over for this meeting with them on his return. The chief order of business at the February 18 meeting was the election of officers for the Chicago chapter. Frank Manning, a charter member of the C. P. L. A. and a member of the National E. C., well known for his leadership in the 1928 New Bedford Textile Strike, was elected Chairman. The secretary is Jonathan Paul, an active member of the A. C. W. of A. These together with Rudolph Bertram, Mordecai Shulman, Gertrude Wilson, Mrs. F. Schneid, Ethel Watson, Joe Gwatin, Manford Ettinger, Don Thompson, Mrs. L. Wolpoff, Sarah Rozner and G. Lawrence, constitute the Executive Committee.

The E. C. was instructed to draw up by-laws for submission to the group, to make a survey of unions and unorganized groups among which work could be done, and to devise ways and means to secure a large number of rank and file worker members. We can look for big doings in Chicago.

At this same meeting the Working Committee appointed at the previous meeting reported on its activities on behalf of unemployment insurance. The Committee had succeeded in interesting a considerable number of active union men and also such economists as Prof. Squires and Douglas in drawing up a bill to meet conditions in Illinois. This larger group had drawn up a bill which departed at some critical points from the C. P. L. A. model bill, though a proposal to include in it contributions from workers had been successfully combatted by the C. P. L. A. representatives. It was felt that a real service had been done by stimulating other groups to activity, and that these groups should be urged to put in their bill so as to secure wider support for the principle of unemployment insurance, but that C. P. L. A.-ers should not themselves sponsor any bill which at vital points departed from the C. P. L. A. bill. The group accordingly voted to support in Illinois the bill introduced in the legislature through Socialist Party influence. It is planning to work out with unions, the S. P. and other groups practical steps for getting the measure before the masses.

Going back to where we left off last month in our report of Chairman Muste's trip, we pick him up in Seattle, Wash. There he again addressed many groups and held a large number of conferences. Classes at the University of Washington, a largely at-

tended Forum meeting of the Seattle Labor College, a banquet given by graduates of Bryn Mawr Summer School and Industrial Y. W. Clubs, a lecture before Workmen's Circle Branches, a luncheon attended by practically all the active social workers in the city, a conference with the active groups among the Seattle High School teachers who have led the fight against the yellow-dog contract for teachers, and a meeting with progressive and militant unionists and active liberal spirits in Tacoma, were included in the schedule.

### Seattle Busy

"Too much credit cannot be given," Muste reports, "to the Seattle Labor College which, for many years under the direction of J. C. Kennedy and now under that of Carl Brannin, has held aloft the banner of militant labor progressivism in the state of Washington. The Labor College reading rooms are a real center of activity. Several classes are being held. The Sunday night Forum, the sale of Labor's News and other labor literature, etc., keep the soul of the Seattle movement from perishing."

The little paper published by the Labor College, called the Vanguard, is also a useful agency for propaganda and education.

The Labor College has taken the lead in organizing an Unemployment Insurance Conference with which a good many local unions throughout the state of Washington have affiliated, and a bill along C. P. L. A. lines has been introduced in the legislature.

From Seattle Chairman Muste journeyed to Sacramento, Calif., where he was cordially received by the Central Labor Union and roundly applauded for his vigorous address on the unemployment situation. The official organ of the C. L. U. quoted extensively from his address in its next issue. He had an opportunity to discuss with officers of the C. L. U. the weaknesses of a bill for unemployment insurance in the California legislature, which is modelled after the American Association for Labor Legislation's proposals.

On the following day Mr. Muste who is a vice president of the American Federation of Teachers was given a dinner by the officers of the Sacramento Local of the A. F. of T., after which he addressed a meeting of Sacramento Teachers on workers' education.

In San Francisco, conferences with active labor people, meetings on unemployment insurance, addresses at the

University of California and Leland Stanford occupied Muste's time fully. He visited Mooney, McNamara and Schmidt at San Quentin, brought them the greetings of friends in the East, and brings back the good wishes of these heroes of the labor movement to all C. P. L. A. members, readers of LABOR AGE, and all others who are working for a militant and progressive labor movement in this country. All three of these class-war prisoners are well and retain the keenest interest in all that goes on in the movement throughout the world.

From San Francisco Chairman Muste journeyed to Southern California. In Los Angeles he addressed meetings of the Machinists, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Council of the Unemployed, the latter organized largely through the valiant efforts of Bill Busick, S. P. organizer. Muste also addressed a great open meeting called by the Socialist Party, an educational meeting of the Yipsils, the open forum of the Los Angeles Civil Liberties Union, the Long Beach Open Forum, F. W. Roman's great educational Forum, and Classes at Scripps and Occidental College.

Brookwood graduates in Los Angeles in cooperation with other groups gave a dinner attended by nearly 200 persons, at which Muste spoke about the activities of various workers' education enterprises, and a considerable sum of money was raised for Brookwood.

On Sunday, February 17, Muste stopped over in Denver, Colo., held a conference during the day with graduates of various workers' educational enterprises, addressed a meeting on workers' education late in the afternoon, and in the evening discussed unemployment insurance at Grace Church Open Forum. Grace Church is also the headquarters of the Denver Labor College, and the day wound up with a conference at which active spirits decided to get to work immediately with plans for the Colorado Labor Summer School, which last year failed to meet. Chairman Muste feels confident that this year the enterprise will be carried through more effectively than ever. In Denver Brookwood graduates were found active in the labor movement, Blanche Goldfield as president of the Journeymen Tailors' Local, Bill Stone and Mike Shulman in the S. P.

Everywhere there appeared an intense interest in C. P. L. A. literature, thousands of copies of which were sold or distributed free.



# In Other Lands

## SPAIN

The land of the Dons was a republic for a brief time some fifty-nine years ago, and Feb. 11 recorded as its natal day. It was therefore a happy coincidence to have a demonstration of resurgent democracy last month come close to the anniversary of Spain's first republic. It was no accident to have the republican movement given recognition by the King with an offer to its exiled leader in Paris to return to Madrid and form a cabinet, presumably after the Dutch or British fashion. Alphonso said he was "tired of being called a tyrant." This was but another way of saying the depression and the instability of the peseta worried him, although the King is not supposed to understand, or even notice economics. Recalling republican firebrands and telling them to govern is characteristic of the Latins and true to their dramatic instincts.

The republicans not wanting to be simply another cloak for the inanities of Alphonso and his favorites demanded that the King put all cards on the table face side up. Before agreeing to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Alphonso they also insisted that the general elections be on the level and that real issues be submitted to the voters. The King balked but did not further interfere with the constitutional rights of parties, or partisans of any hues. He induced Admiral Aznar to form a stop gap cabinet since the other important groups declined the task. The Aznar group is just carrying on the ordinary public services and necessary duties of police and tax-collecting until the elections in March decide what kind of government the nation indicates it wants.

All sides concede it is the beginning of the end of the old order. As the documents and news of the late revolutionary activities in Jaca and other places are being published the plain citizens are discovering that a change after all would not be bad for the country. The Socialists with some groups and one important union, the General Workers, are threatening to boycott the elections unless the issues are plainer and if they persist in their course it will mean, no matter who wins at the polls, more revolutionary work for them and for some of the moderates who do not like half-way measures. European observers are agreed that with all the King's adroitness he is bound to lose in the end in that the question of monarchy versus republic is being debated by the people, and what is discussed

to-day becomes settled facts to-morrow. The depression hit Spain rather late but it is doing more to educate the people than all the agitators and propagandists could do in a generation. It is significant that the Communists don't figure in the present commotion, and the published records prove they did nothing substantial in the late uprising. A Spanish republic would have great influence in South America.

## GREAT BRITAIN

MacDonald's cabinet seems to have as many lives as the proverbial cat and it is losing them one by one. The Liberals dealt MacDonald a smashing blow when they amended beyond recognition the Trades Dispute Bill, therefore compelling the Premier to withdraw the bill. As this was one of the rallying cries of the Labor Party at the last elections one perceives what a blow the Liberals struck. They will barely keep MacDonald in office till their proportional representation bill is passed. An increase in the dole and its financing by the state treasury is all that MacDonald has to show the voters. Unemployed figures continue to mount upwards with no relief in sight. The textile situation has improved by the lock out ending and the magnates backing out their stretchout proposals. Shipping is in a bad way. Only the luxury trades show any sign of prosperity. In the field of international politics as usual Labor did well. Henderson has managed to get some sort of an agreement between Italy and France but just what price Paris demanded and must have got is another riddle. Some hint at a larger army. Italy gets a loan to save it from bankruptcy. Throughout all negotiations the Cabinet has managed to keep the British navy larger than any other thereby insuring the ability of any future government, Tory or Liberal, to blockade and starve a country as was done to Germany after the war ended, and to Russia after the Bolsheviks sprang their coup de etat. Snowden is threatening economy in government and is carrying them out with the zeal of a genuine bourgeois saint. One would think Ben Franklin was his political philosopher, if the Chancellor has any, and not Marx, Hyndman or Hardie. Mosley has gone on another rampage and has carried a few with him this time. Should he be able to secure the financial backing he will be able to make it hot, not alone for the Labor Party, but for the Liberals who are trying to come back and for the

young Tories of the Churchill-Beaverbrook school. The ineptitude of MacDonald's government and his failure in almost all his domestic plans play into the hands of Mosley and his firebrand intellectuals.

## IRELAND

The Belfast government is bankrupt. Business is deplorable. There is talk of Ulster uniting with the Free State. So far Belfast, reactionary and hide bound as it is, has had its bills paid for it by the Labor Government, Snowden's threats to the contrary notwithstanding. There was a general strike of the building trades of Dublin to resist a cut proposed by the masters. Economic conditions are much better in the Free State than in the North where the linen and ship building industries are almost dead.

## GERMANY, POLAND, RUSSIA AND CHINA

Hitlerites walked out of the Reichstag and effaced themselves better than their opponents could have dreamed of doing to them. As a political move it worked in the wrong direction. Should Hitler's band walk back they will become the laughing stock of Germany. Economic conditions are not mending fast enough to catch up with the large amount of unemployment. Poland continues to rave over its unnatural boundaries and the dictatorship with its brutalities continue. Russia continues to raise Cain with the rest of the world, not by propaganda, but by underselling other countries. France has joined the others in the howl about forced labor. The absurdity of this talk is that Britain, France, Portugal and Holland all practice forced labor in African and Asiatic dependencies or colonies. The Five Year plan has gone far enough to assure its success and the howls of pain from the capitalistic countries would indicate it is more successful than the correspondents of our big papers have admitted. China goes on fighting and Russia keeps on penetrating into Manchuria and Mongolia. The Soviet seems to be the only country gaining territory by China's troubles. Demonetization of silver is killing China's European trade.

## INDIA

The Round Table Conference ended in London with a proposal from MacDonald which was supported by Tories and Liberals. This would make one suspicious of it without having to study it.

(Continued on page 29)



# "Say It With Books"



## Labor and Textiles

**Labor and Textiles, by Robert W. Dunn and Jack Hardy, International Publishers. \$1.00.**

**T**HIS book does great credit to its authors and renders a very important service to all those interested in the textile industry and, more especially, in the workers in that industry. The book deals with cotton and wool, an earlier volume in the Labor and Industry Series entitled "Labor and Silk," by Grace Hutchins, dealing with silk, the other important branch of the industry.

The sections of this book which deal with the history of the industry, wages, hours, conditions of work, the stretch-out, mergers, tariffs, international competition, etc., are packed full of accurate and vital information and at the same time constitute interesting reading.

More picturesque, of course, are the chapters dealing with the historic struggles of the textile workers for the right to organize and for improvement in their always wretched conditions. One could wish for a little more vividness and swing in this part of the story, a little more playing up perhaps of the striking personalities which have played their part in these struggles. This is, however, a minor criticism.

It is a real achievement that the authors, frankly sympathetic with the Communist movement and stating in their concluding paragraph that strengthening the forces of the National Textile Workers' Union (Communist) should be the aim of every textile worker in America, have, in the main, told their story of the various strikes and efforts to organize the industry with accuracy and fairness to the groups involved and without resort to mud-slinging. It would not be easy to write a more satisfactory account of such a controversial subject as this.

Certain points may, however, fairly be raised. In the story of the Passaic strike of 1926 there is severe condemnation of the U.T.W. (the American Federation of Labor Union) and high praise for many of those features of the strike for which the left wing leadership was responsible. There cannot be much quar-

rel with that general point of view, particularly in the light shed upon U.T.W. policies and shortcomings by recent events in the South. However, to arrive at a fair estimate of the role played in the strike by various elements, it must be borne in mind that the left wing leadership was very coy about coming into the A. F. of L. in the early period of the strike when it was still in first class shape, though avowing allegiance to the policy of the united front; and that when the U.T.W. finally took the strike over, it had been dragging on for many months and things had come to a pass when it would have been difficult, if not impossible, for any one to get a good settlement.

Furthermore, the criticism of the U.T.W.'s "educational work" and its dealing with the Botany Mills management after the strike is apparently justified (the U. T. W. representative on the spot was in my opinion the dupe of the personnel manager of the Botany Mills, the latter playing the role of the labor spy) but, it is also true that from the very day that the U.T.W. took over the strike the left wing leaders, both local and outsiders, were suspicious of the U.T.W. and did not give the cooperation without which success was out of the question. When all is said, however, the picture which the authors draw may stand as about as fair a one as can be reached. Certainly nothing could have been worse than the discouraging speech which President McMahon at the dictation of Matthew Woll made to the strikers on the day when their accession to the A. F. of L. was "celebrated" or than the U. T. W. organizer put on the job in Passaic, who thought his chief task was to spy out the Moscow connections of the strike leaders and that he could accomplish this by looking through the waste baskets under their very eyes!

The statement on page 227 to the effect that after the New Bedford strike of 1928, "Contrary to the experience of many other textile strikes both unions were able to keep substantial locals going after the end of the struggle," is inexact and misleading. The U.T.W. locals in New Bedford are simply the

continuation of the A.F.T.O. locals which had been in existence for years before the strike, and the left wing N.T.W.U. local did not flourish for any longer period after the strike than similar organizations had done after similar textile struggles.

The most serious criticism of the authors' presentation has to do with the report on the Marion and Gastonia strikes of 1929. The role played by the Gastonia strikers in setting an inspiring example of militancy to the Southern textile workers is rightly emphasized. The militancy of the Marion strikers might, however, have been given some more generous recognition. The errors and crimes of the A. F. of L. policy in Marion are justly criticized. But to say, referring to Gastonia, "There the workers were vigorously led and they defended themselves. In Marion they were misled and massacred," is again misleading and doing an injustice to the Marion workers. It was unnecessary, furthermore, to perpetrate this injustice against the Marion workers for the faults of the A. F. of L. policy could be pointed out without drawing this erroneous conclusion. The Marion workers were not massacred because they were misled or failed to defend themselves but because under the inspiration of progressive educational work, which had been carried on in Marion during the summer of 1929, they refused to submit to the breach of any agreement on the part of the management. And, as for Gastonia, the authors, of course, refer to the murder of Ella May Wiggins and to others who were shot at the same time and might have been killed. Were these people also massacred because they had been misled?

In the concluding chapter entitled "The Workers' Outlook," the authors sketch the kind of union needed in the textile industry, and with their general outline no progressive will have any quarrel. They go on to state that the N.T.W. is such a union and that all textile workers in America should come to its support. That we frankly doubt. No union, we believe, can function under the direct dictatorship of a political party

such as the Communist Party at present seeks to impose upon its industrial unions. The present leadership of the American Communist Party has certainly not demonstrated its fitness for such a responsibility.

Let me repeat, however, that this is an excellent and very useful piece of work. Here's hoping that my saying so will not place Robert Dunn and Jack Hardy or their book under the suspicion of the Big Guns in Moscow.

A. J. M.

**VIOLENCE IN THE CLASS WAR**  
Dynamite, the Story of Class Violence in America. By Louis Adamic, The Viking Press, New York, 1931, \$3.50.

IT is ironic that in that country which outstandingly denies the existence of the class struggle, more widespread violence has featured the Capital-Labor conflict than in any other. The evolution of this class violence in the United States is traced in Adamic's book.

From the mild calling of "bad names" in the first quarter of the 18th century, the workers used their fists, then sticks and stones, then guns and finally dynamite in the effort to redress their wrongs. Such was the logical answer to the brutal tactics of suppression used by the employing class.

"Dynamite... that's the stuff!" was Albert Parson's cry in the anarchist "Alarm" in the 1885 campaign for the 8-hour day. Ten years before, in the upheavals of 1877, capitalistic guns had viciously put down the rioting workingmen. Bearing this in mind, the bomb was openly advocated by the 8-hour day anarchist leaders as the chief effective weapon of the underdog.

"Stuff several pounds of this sublime stuff," writes Parsons, "into an inch pipe (gas or water pipe), plug up both ends, insert a cap with a fuse attached, place this in the immediate vicinity of a lot of rich loafers who live by the sweat of other people's brows, and light the fuse. A most cheerful and gratifying result will follow. A pound of this good stuff beats a bushel of ballots all hollow—and don't forget it!"

Haymarket, with its martyrs, brought such teachings abruptly to a close. The capitalist class continued to build more arsenals and armories, with more complicated death-dealing machinery for ready use to suppress the hungry. "Respectable" labor leaders in the Knights of Labor hastened to disassociate themselves from the disciples of dynamite. The A. F. of L. arose, with the memories of Haymarket before it, and carried out its 1890 fight for the 8-hour day without spectacular force. With the rise of the A. F. of L., notes the author, the Labor Movement became "a racket," adopting the capitalistic philosophy of getting results for its select members at the expense of other workers. The typical leader of the Gompers' school

subtle tactics of the Mollie Maguires, blew up the Los Angeles Times building. The MacNamaras, who with others of their type had built the movement for Gompers, were weepingly repudiated by him.

In contract to the weeping Gompers, the author places Bill Haywood, open champion of violence and sabotage. The forthrightness of Haywood and Debs and the Chicago anarchists, all of whom were motivated by a social philosophy, is set off in brilliant opposition to the "hour and wage" viewpoint of the A. F. of L. It is out of this narrow opportunism that "racketeering" inevitably sprang up in the Labor Movement. The McNamara episode showed the danger of direct "jobs," done by those close to the Movement. The employment of expert gunmen, to answer the repression and gunmen of the employers, seemed a logical conclusion. At the same time, the author expresses his belief that the A. F. of L. was the only workers' organization that could have functioned successfully in the last 40 years. And he predicts that the Communists will use "racketeers" extensively in future battles, as they did in the needle trades.

It is evident that the age-old truism holds good, and that the attitude and actions of the dominant class determine the character of the underdog's answer in America. Frame-ups, massacres and

ruthless use of the military have marked the capitalists' methods, as the book sets forth. Ludlow, Paint Creek, Centralia, the murder of Fannie Snelkins, the Moon-ey-Billings, Joe Hill and Sacco-Vanzetti frame-ups are put into the record. While the agent provocateur is mentioned,

more attention might have been devoted to his role. It would also have been helpful to the reader to have had the details of the Ettor-Giovannitti frame-up at Lawrence set forth in more detail.

The A. F. of L. has little future, according to the author. It is gradually fading from the industrial scene. More leftward elements, with the Communists setting the pace, will challenge Capitalism in the next ten years. Violence will be their weapon. "Fight or



**AMERICAN STREET SCENE**  
Run on Cover of Adamic's "Dynamite"

he avers, "was the man of small abilities, narrow-minded, without social vision. . . . He devoted himself diligently to the study of such individuals as might threaten his own job."

Despite such leadership, with its mouth-service to non-violence, the rapacity of the employers' associations brought to the surface men of dangerous courage, who were known as such. The spirit of Parsons, allied to the more

Starve," he notes, is the Communist motto, which is rallying many to the red banner. The I. W. W., he thinks, will be revived.

The book is vividly written. One who picks it up puts it down only after having read it through. It even invites a second and third reading. Of course, there are some obvious defects. The injunction as a source of violence deserves more consideration than is given it. The difference between the violence pursued for a social ideal and the use of "criminal racketeering" might have been discussed more thoroughly. Reference to the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and to several significant recent strikes is omitted. But the work fills a long-felt need, that violence as a weapon in the struggle of the haves and have-nots should be frankly discussed. It is an outstanding contribution to the study of the class struggle in America.

LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ.

## CAN THE CHURCH HELP?

The Church and Industry, by Spencer Miller, Jr. and Joseph F. Fletcher. Longman's, Green & Co., 273 pages. \$2.50.

THROUGHOUT this book the phrase "the challenge of industry to the church" recurs. That challenge undoubtedly exists now as much as it did in the '80s when the Church Association for the Advancement of the Interests of Labor (C.A.I.L.) was organized. A great deal of educational work has been done by Church groups interested in industrial relations since then, yet it must be admitted that the results are meager. Present day strikes and lock-outs are just as bitter and relentless as they ever were, and good Christian employers use injunctions and yellow dog contracts, hire labor spies and starve their striking workers into submission, back to jobs that pay less than living wages, without impairing in the slightest their standing in their churches.

From time to time church organizations adopt delightful resolutions in

favor of decent wages and against child labor, etc., but when workers are engaged in struggles with employers the Church seems to be entirely ineffective. Industrialists sitting pretty are in no mood to listen to liberal men of the cloth (how few there are!) who may remind them of Christian ethics. Neither is there anything in this book to indicate that in the future the Church will have any more influence in bringing about industrial harmony than it has had in the past. As a matter of fact, it is quite likely that as industrial struggles become more and more intense, as they are bound to, the Church will be completely ignored by employers who worship Mammon above everything else.

The authors have written an informative chapter on the activities of the Church League for Industrial Democracy, formed after the War. This organization stands out as one which is making a real effort to carry out the Church's teachings as applied to industry.

It is a pleasure to find the printers' union label in this book.

LEONARD BRIGHT.

## ~::~ FURTHER EDITORIAL COMMENT ~::~

REPORTS reach us that something like a mass movement of miners into the Howat U. M. W. of A. is under way in West Virginia. If this is really the case, it is one of the most heartening things that has occurred in many a day, and offsets to some extent the bitterness

### A Chance To Organize?

one must feel over the shameful abandonment of the Danville textile strike.

We hope that the Howat organization will throw its full strength into the West Virginia campaign, if there is really an opening in that state which has been the scene of so many noble and historic battles for unionization of the coal mines. It would be a monstrous disgrace for them to fail to come to the aid of the bitterly exploited West Virginia miners. By such failure they would lose also the one chance they have to prove their integrity to the satisfaction of the rank and file of the miners in Illinois and to win their whole-hearted support. It is no secret that by no means all of the Illinois rank and file are as yet convinced that the new organization is any more to be trusted than the Lewis crowd. We are not arguing now as to the soundness or unsoundness of the miners' suspicions; the point is that they have them, they must be rid of them in order that they may give their devotion and full support to the new union, and this can come only from clear evidence that the new union will make a desperate effort to organize the unorganized miners as its leaders have promised they would.

ONCE more has the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers set the pace for the rest of the A. F. of L. unions. Despite the depression, the Hosiery Workers have sailed into the Philadelphia non-union situation. The response has been greater than they had anticipated.

### Hosiery Workers Continue Valiant Battles

Mill after mill has walked out. Several of them have already settled. Even Marvin Bell, of the notorious strike-breaking "Philadelphia Textile Manufacturers Association" has come out against the wage cutting policy which precipitated the strike.

The strike has been conducted militantly. Mass picketing has led to persecution of the workers by Major Schofield, Police Commissioner. Hundreds of pickets have been arrested. Undaunted, the Hosiery Workers have appealed to Governor Pinchot and have won their case for picketing in the magistrates' courts. Very seldom has there been such an atmosphere of eventual union success as in the present General Strike of the non-union shops and mills.

Were every A. F. of L. organization to meet the present crisis as the Hosiery Workers are doing, there would be a different story than the present chapter in labor history. As it is, the spontaneous revolt of the workers in other situations is being led more and more by Communist "agitators." Such unions as the Hosiery Workers cannot win permanent success by fighting alone. The entire Labor Movement must move forward.

The chief weakness in the Hosiery Workers' armour is their hesitancy to recognize that the Movement must be made over, if their own union is to survive.



# WHAT OUR READERS THINK

## THE BOSS AND THE LEADER

Dear Editor:

Mr. Burke's innocence almost made me laugh, although it is tragic.

I really don't know how to classify Mr. Burke;—as an innocent one,—one who makes himself innocent of everything that is going on in the Labor Movement, or as one who is as corrupt as the rest of the leaders.

Mr. Burke said:—"The indifference of the average working man to his own welfare is enough to make men and angels weep." Why should the worker feel in any way different, when the philosophy of his leader is similar to his employer's?

For instance:—The boss supports the Republican Party—so does the Union Leader.

The boss is for a high tariff—so is the Leader.

The boss is against Russia—so is the Leader.

The boss is against a State Unemployment Insurance, helping workers when in distress—so is the Leader.

The boss is prejudiced against colored workers, and is always trying to draw the line between the two races—so is the Leader.

The boss exploits his workers for increased profits,—well, the Leader tries to get as much as he possibly can, regardless of conditions or depressions, etc.

I would like Mr. Burke to tell us how many of the Leaders have reduced their big salaries; at the time when workers are unemployed, or those who are employed, working for \$8-14 a week?

Worker's money is usually spent for big salaries, and when it comes to organization work there is nothing left. Is Mr. Burke immune to all that and to workers' literature,—"Justice for Organized Workers"?

I feel that "Justice for Organized Workers" by Mr. Kirshbaum is the greatest contribution today, because he expresses the thoughts of hundreds of workers who lack intelligence and education, to voice their opinion against the injustices done to them.

In conclusion I wish to state that as long as this philosophy will prevail in the Labor Movement, there will be no progressive and militant unions, where organized and unorganized stand united, and strive for better, humane conditions.

ANNA SOLOMON.

Philadelphia, Pa.

## PRAISE FOR A. C. W.

Dear Editor:

Mr. Louis Kirshbaum, author of "Justice for Organized Workers" and an ex-

member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, criticizes Dr. Leo Wolman because, as a remedy for unemployment, he proposes unemployment insurance "the kind they have in the men's clothing industry."

As a member of the Amalgamated and as one who has contributed to the unemployment insurance fund and received benefits from it for the last seven years, I should like to know what is wrong with it. Of course, the benefits received are not as large as Mr. Kirshbaum and I would want them to be but does Mr. Kirshbaum mean that if we can't get just what we want, we will not take anything at all? Wouldn't every American worker be too glad to get even as little as the members of the Amalgamated (those in Chicago, Rochester and New York) get? The Amalgamated is not satisfied with what it gets, but it is the best it can get, and it is more than other American workers are getting.

Whether Dr. Wolman will read Mr. Kirshbaum's letter and answer his questions, I do not know. But I think Mr. Kirshbaum knows the answer to his questions as well as Dr. Wolman: personal grievances against the Amalgamated.

I have read Mr. Kirshbaum's pamphlet very carefully and written to him my opinion. But I cannot sympathize with him when he condemns the entire organization because of his misunderstandings with certain business agents or officers of a certain local.

The Amalgamated is admittedly the most progressive and successful labor union in America today. Yet neither its officers nor I, a rank and filer, maintain that it's faultless or perfect. It has its shortcomings, as any active organization will have them; it has also its achievements, which many organizations lack.

JONATHAN PAUL.

914 Oakdale Avenue,  
Chicago, Ill.

## A. F. OF L. AND "SOCIETY"

Dear Editor:

A society news item may interest you and Labor Age readers. It reveals how brazen and heartless high salaried officials of the A. F. of L. have become, wasting per capita tax on labor hating, non-union "society people" in the most notorious hold-up dive in Washington while Danville strikers starve and thousands of A. F. of L. union families worry. It is enough to make the angels weep.

The item from the Washington Post of January 30, 1931 reads:

"Mrs. Frank Morrison entertained at luncheon yesterday at Wardman Park in

honor of Mrs. Benjamin Soule Gantz, wife of Commander Gantz, U.S.N. Commander and Mrs. Gantz have recently returned from the Orient, where they have been stationed for the past two years. Among those present were:

"Mrs. William A. Doak, wife of Secretary of Labor; Mrs. T. S. Thorne, wife of Commander Thorne; Mrs. Edward Bank Gibson, wife of Commander Gibson; Mrs. George C. Simmons, wife of Commander Simmons; Mrs. Ivan E. Bass, wife of Capt. Bass; Mrs. Wallace Streater, U. S. A.; Mrs. Tillman B. Parks, wife of Representative Parks, of Arkansas; Mrs. Gertrude V. Offitt, Mrs. Edward Campbell Shields, Mrs. Harry M. Packard, Miss Margaret Mansfield, Mrs. Norman Hardy Britton, Mrs. Eleanor Cox Griffith. This is the first of a series of luncheons Mrs. Morrison will give."

Only one of these women is the relative of a trade unionist and he is not a member of the A. F. of L. All are militaristic parasites and political fakery. When so many are out of work, it is a tactless and shameful affair.

I am the wife of a printer unemployed for 13 months.

MRS. J. F. W.

Washington, D. C.

## SUFFERING IN MARION

Dear Editor:

The following letter from Marion, N. C., received early in February, may induce some of Labor Age's readers to join in alleviating the suffering there. It reads:

"Dear Mrs. Jack:

"Three packages arrived safely and thank you very much for them. We are making your rug sometime this week.

"Yes, it's true that the people of Danville need help, but so do the people in Marion. The greatest suffering of a strike is not during the boom of the strike, but there is always a part of the people left out of work, which the company refuses to work and they are left to do the best they can.

"It's true that relief here was given for a long time and we shall not forget our friends away from here who have been so kind to help. All forms of relief were stopped before Christmas. For a while Miss Lucille Kohn and Tom Tippet of Brookwood sent in some money to my husband which was given each week a limited amount (say \$5 to a family of 8 or 10). You can imagine how they have struggled to live. The last money given in Marion was \$100, by Jessie Lloyd of Federated Press. This was given before Christmas and has been gone long ago.

"There are now about 16 or 18 families who are suffering in Marion for want of food, clothes and medical care. Some of them have not had any coal this winter. There are children trying to go to school who have not had a book this year. The county does not furnish books. There are families who have sold furniture out of the house for food, one woman sold her cook stove for bread.

"There is much sickness due to improper food. Lots of pellagra. These families have tried to get work and have failed. They had much rather work and earn their bread than beg, but some of us are blacklisted and can't get work. That is why we are trying to sell rugs. There are some people facing eviction who can't pay their rent."

The letter is from Grace Elliott.

MRS. ANNA N. DAVIS.

New York City.

(Money sent to the Marion sufferers through *Labor Age* will reach them promptly.)

#### FOUR-SQUARE FAR INDIAN FREEDOM

Dear Editor:

I was very much pained and surprised by the unclear and contradictory position taken by the *Labor Age* in its Indian editorial in the February issue. It struck as so much at variance with the clear-cut and militant stand you usually take on such questions, that I feel it my duty to the cause of Indian independence, and to the *Labor Age*, for which I have the friendliest regard, to call the matter to your attention, immediately.

First it must be noted that the Round Table Conference was the culmination of many months of the most ruthless frightfulness against the Indian people, and years of the cruelest and most degrading oppression. In this infamous and bloody business, Ramsay MacDonald played a leading and responsible part. The Round Table Conference was called not to give "full, responsible self-government to India," as you imply, but rather as a desperate attempt on the part of the British Empire, with MacDonald as its Prime Minister, to head off the seething tide of discontent and revolt against British tyranny. Since when do imperialist governments make what you call, "a substantial move in the direction of independence" in dealing with oppressed colonial people? The exact opposite is true. The Round Table Conference, while employing the usual diplomatic camouflage about extending self-government to India, was in fact intended only to further insure the power of Britain's mailed, imperialist fist. Under these cir-

cumstances, I fail to see why congratulations are in order for one, whom you still call "the Labor premier."

The fact that the Round Table Conference program was merely a hypocritical cover for tightening the imperialist chains upon the Indian people, is indicated by your article in which you point out that control of finances, foreign affairs and the armed forces, are retained by Great Britain. What remains is merely a shadow. A further proof of the utter insincerity of MacDonald is the fact that in spite of all his veiled declarations of friendship for the Indian people, 50,000 political prisoners are at this moment languishing in the foulest dungeons of India. The release of Gandhi must be considered only as a maneuver in the British imperialist chess game against the Indian people. If Gandhi refuses to be a pawn in this vile game, rest assured that he will be returned to jail before very long.

Apparently, according to your article, the Indian people are now in duty bound to show their deep appreciation of Mr. MacDonald's great generosity—to forget the cruel lahti charges, and airplane raids, to forget the degradation of the liquor and opium traffic, to forget the years of oppression, that have made India a hell-hole for our people. Should the Indian people, however, be perverse and unwilling to accept Mr. MacDonald's generous terms, then forsooth "progressives and Socialists throughout the world have no choice but to support them unreservedly and enthusiastically." A left-handed and reluctant support indeed!

Why does your article allude to the Indian struggle for independence, the most far-reaching and significant event since the Russian Revolution, as a "disturbance?" Pray whom is it disturbing if not the British imperialist lords? Are we then desirous of restoring "civil order" so that the British vampire may peacefully suck the life blood of what was once a proud, cultured and contented nation? I don't think so. Nor do I believe the writer of the article had this in mind.

In view of the importance of the Indian question, I hope that the *Labor Age* will carry additional informative material on this question in the future, and that hereafter it will take the stand we all expect it to take, four-square for full and immediate independence for the 320,000,000 enslaved and suffering people of India, and condemning in the strongest terms all imperialist tyrants from Churchill to MacDonald.

Sincerely yours,

SAILENDRA nath GHOSE.

Friends of India's Independence, New York City.

#### APPEAL FOR FRIEDMAN

Dear Editor:-

Bonchi Friedman, a needle trades worker, active in trade union work near Los Angeles, Calif., was attacked by the Los Angeles police "red squad" on the night of January 17th. They broke into his home, beat him and threw salt in his eyes. He was blinded for several days and so badly injured that he was still in bed when he wrote for help on January 30th.

Friedman, who is a graduate of Brookwood Labor College, was so severely injured in the strike of the New York paper box makers in 1927 that he will probably never fully recover. A mounted policeman rode up on the sidewalk and kicked Friedman in the back, causing an injury to the spine. Physicians have advised sunshine in a warm climate, electrical treatments, etc. Twice in the past three years a small fund has been raised to provide some medical treatment and sunshine—\$250 at one time and about \$500 at another. But when these amounts were exhausted Friedman went to work again. For the past year he has been earning his living in California, working nearly 12 hours a day, and trying to help with trade union organization in the evenings. Because of his activity in organization work, he was picked out for a brutal attack by the police.

He is very ill as a result of this attack, and is penniless. His life is at stake, as 6 months rest is needed for that purpose.

Contributions to the Bonchi Friedman Fund may be sent to Adelaide Schulkind, Treas., 104 5th Ave., Room 2008, New York City.

SAM FISHER.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DATA

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## Detroit Auto Workers

(Continued from Page 7)

ing a general membership drive. The agreement arrived at at that conference expressly provided, "It shall be the definite aim and avowed purpose of the A. F. of L. to bring about the transfer of those organized in the automobile industry to the jurisdiction of the respective national and international union, this transfer to be effected as speedily as possible."

However, the campaign fizzled out. The battle of the Titans ended in a smashing victory for the employers. The American Federation of Labor with its craft union basis could no more organize the automobile industry than it could the steel industry. Detroit was still safe for the American Plan. Not only did the A. F. of L. refuse to waive jurisdictional claims but it adopted a rather novel method according to James O'Connell, President of the Metal Trades Department of the A. F. of L., of organizing these workers. Instead of using the old fashioned methods of holding mass meetings, agitating in front of the plants and distributing special union literature dealing with the problems of the automobile workers, the A. F. of L. leaders attempted to induce the officials of some of the automobile plants to enter into a conference with them for the purpose of trying to negotiate an understanding that might result in lessening the opposition on the part of the officials of the companies to unionizing of their employees. How naive the laborites were! The hard boiled motor executives must have had many a laugh when discussing this amongst themselves.

### Labor Demand Falling

With increased rationalization and stabilization of the motor industry, the demand for labor is lessening. In 1914 the average number of motor vehicles per worker was approximately 4.5, while in 1927 it had grown to approximately 9.8. Wages have been ruthlessly cut and shut downs are very common. The motor industry is equipped to produce over eight million units each year. In 1929, a boom year, the entire world could only consume about six million units. Ford can easily produce 15,000 cars a day but unfortunately for Detroit workers he is not able to sell his output, and consequently, is compelled to shut down his plants for varying periods. He also is managing to produce more

cars with fewer workers, thereby reducing his labor costs and at the same time increasing his profits. Not only that, but the worker, who in 1925 was persuaded to buy that place in the country, is not able, in the year 1931, to keep up the payments. Foreclosures of these long term contracts or land contracts are common. Not a day goes by without one to two hundred homes being taken away from these workers by legal process. As a matter of fact, it pays the worker to give up his home without a struggle rather than keep up payments, for he could buy a better home with the money he owes on the old one. There is a plethora of houses in Detroit for sale. Thousands of flats and homes are vacant. The home owning industry has been debunked in Detroit.

Naturally this situation has affected the building industry and at the same time the building trade unions. The good old days are gone. The building trade worker is no longer the labor aristocrat. He frequents a soup kitchen conducted by the Detroit Federation of Labor and financed by the City of Detroit. About 40 per cent of all trade union members in Detroit are unemployed.

Unemployment is rife in Detroit. One hundred and fifty thousand men and women are walking the streets searching for jobs. At the present time 102,373 unemployed are registered with the Mayor's Unemployment Committee. Nearly 45,000 families are receiving doles from the Welfare Department, receiving last month over two million dollars. Over 13,466 men are being fed and 6,023 lodged by the City. We proudly claim to do more for the unemployed than any other large municipality. We can point with pride to well equipped soup kitchens, ancient factories used for lodging houses, warehouses full of cast off clothing donated by generous Detroiters and children going to school without food or proper clothing.

With poverty sweeping over the city like a plague, it would be expected to find a strong radical and labor movement. There is no strong organized labor movement in Detroit. That seems to be one of those unexplainable contradictions. With the exception of the unions affiliated with the Detroit Federation of Labor, which has a membership of about 7,000, there is no other strongly organized labor organization. The Communist Party, the S.L.P., the Proletarian and the Socialist Party have small branch-

## American Workers

(Continued from Page 15)

For C. P. L. A. it sums up in this: the soundness of our general program and approach is confirmed; the chance to function is greater than ever; there is nothing on the horizon that seems able to take our place. We must push on vigorously, therefore, along such lines as we have worked out, we must make ourselves a national movement, and we must work out correctly in view of new conditions how in various unions, in the South, on the political field, we can most effectively apply our program in the new period in American labor history on which we have entered.

## In Other Lands

(Continued from page 23)

It turns out to be a proposal to increase the power of the Governor-general. It is not like the constitution of U. S. A. as stated by politicians interested in popularizing the report. It gives the semi-independent princes and the rulers of the independent states power to appoint delegates or representatives to the Congress of All India, thus disfranchising the people within those states. It only gives the right to vote to a small selected class in the British ruled states and provinces. In all India scarcely more than ten million people can vote under the new dispensation. They are of the professional and upper middle class. This insures a conservative congress or Parliament and government even if there were no safe guards thrown around the British Viceroy. The princes' delegates would naturally side with the Government.

The proposal of the Round Table Conference to India was MacDonald's greatest service to the ruling class of India and of England.

P. L. QUINLAN.

es here. However, their combined influence seems to be nil upon the attitude of Detroit Labor. One can't, however, help but feel that the future is not bleak and barren. Somehow or other, one feels that a surging mass rising is in the offing. Here and there indications seem to be that something is going to happen. Detroit Labor is not going to be satisfied with soup kitchens, welfare doles, flop houses and Hoover prosperity. Detroit labor will assert itself, will demand its rights, and, through proper organization and education will secure them.

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